

SENATE’S CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
COMMENTS ON THE 5TH WEEKLY REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT DATED 27 APRIL 2020

Herein are the consolidated comments of the Senate’s Congressional Oversight Committee. Some are reiterations, others are new observations while still others are proposals on the transition to a “new normal” or modified ECQ. The extended ECQ for NCR and a few other regions are set to end on May 15, 2020. There are still many uncertainties. The need for a concrete plan of action for the inevitable “new normal” is imperative if we intend to open up and still flatten the curve.

I. PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO ALL AFFECTED SECTORS

Update on the Social Amelioration Programs (SAPs) (p. 2)

- As previously commented, there is still slow progress as to the distribution of the emergency subsidy. The DSWD and the DILG should work on identifying and addressing the factors for the delay in the distribution and the issue of assistance for those qualified under the SAP but were not accommodated due to deficiency of funds allocated to the LGUs.¹
- The recommendation of adopting a bottom-up approach in the identification of the number of beneficiaries is reiterated. It is suggested that the LGUs gather data and submit the same to the national government for vetting.²
- Similarly, DSWD reported that out of 90,000 targeted driver-beneficiaries, only 40,418 drivers have been served. What is the timeline for the distribution of the SAP financial assistance to intended beneficiaries in NCR? What are the reasons why there was no distribution of subsidy for TNVS and PUV sectors for over 15 days, and how do we address this delay?³
- DSWD and DOLE should harmonize assistance to tricycle and pedicab drivers who are affected by the ban on mass transportation but are not part of DSWD’s SAP for drivers. What are the efforts done to extend help to tricycle and pedicab drivers?⁴
- The CAMP-AKAP for displaced OFWs of DOLE and FSRF of DA also have low utilization of 13.67% and 21.50%, respectively. What are the

¹ Sen. Cayetano, Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 1), Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 1), Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 2), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 9), Sen. Lacson (Annex G, pp. 2-3), and Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 1)

² Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 4)

³ Sen. Angara (Annex D, pp. 1-2), Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 3), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 9), and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 2)

⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 5)

plans/measures in place to be adopted by these agencies to expedite distribution?⁵

- DOLE's programs should still be implemented alongside the recently launched SBWS Program. First, we must continue financing TUPAD-BKKB, which covers affected informal workers. Second, CAMP should continue to provide assistance to the remaining 2.3M workers not covered under SBWS. And third, there must be assurance that the budget for DOLE AKAP is adequate to support OFWs needing assistance.⁶
- DOLE should launch its online monitoring system which provides real-time updates on the distribution of financial assistance to formal and informal workers and OFWs.⁷
- As with last week's report, the current one failed to provide any update as to the purported commitment in the 3rd weekly report about raising more than Php 60B to accommodate lower-middle income families in the emergency subsidy program. The government must assess those middle-income families that are falling into financial difficulties and craft a more inclusive SAP.⁸
- Based on the Report, the National Government released Php 6B and Php 36B as additional support for LGUs under the Bayanihan Grant. However, per DBM's LBC No. 125, the grant amounts to only Php 30.8B. Is it correct to say that the grant was further increased to Php 36B?⁹
- DILG should issue a Memorandum Order mandating all LGUs to post in conspicuous places within their areas of jurisdiction and in their website, the auditing reports on the cash and non-cash subsidies provided to their respective constituents.¹⁰
- We reiterate the need for a comprehensive report on the delivery of financial support from agencies tasked to do the same which reflects (1) the scope of the assistance provided, whether or not the budget allocated was enough for every qualified person; (2) the turnover time or the average waiting time before the financial assistance reached the beneficiaries; (3) an assessment of the adequacy of the assistance given to support the household beneficiaries during the lockdown; and more importantly, (4) the bottlenecks in the implementation and possible modifications to improve the delivery of support to the public.¹¹
- Before a second tranche of cash aid to the poor, the DSWD, possibly in coordination with the DILG, should first ensure the full implementation and

⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 1), Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 2), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 6) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 2)

⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, pp. 7-8)

⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 8)

⁸ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 2) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 6)

⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 2)

¹⁰ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 1) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 4)

¹¹ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 11)

accounting of the P100B for the dole outs for the first month of implementation of SAP.¹²

- It is recommended that the assistance to vulnerable families be continued whether they are located in areas under ECQ or not.¹³

Implementation of the SAP for Small Businesses (p. 4)

- We reiterate our request for clarification on whether private schools are qualified to apply under the Small Business Wage Subsidy Program.
- To date, employers still find it difficult to apply online. Thus, the DICT must act swiftly to provide full technical support to SSS and other agencies with online application schemes to prevent further delay on the roll out of government support programs.¹⁴
- We appeal to DOF to ramp up the application of the SBWS program. Based on last week's report, the SBWS program targets to cover some 3.4 million employees but as of 22 April 2020, only 130,188 employees have applied. What are the reasons for the low turnout of applicants?¹⁵
- DOF should also consider increasing SBWS funding to provide cash or cash equivalent aid to other MSMEs not included under the original coverage.¹⁶
- We reiterate our recommendation to DOLE and DOF that for MSMEs that previously applied to CAMP but did not receive cash aid, the prioritization in order of their application should still be maintained in the first payout of SBWS. An efficient transfer of CAMP applications must be ensured to prevent additional requirements and to lessen procedures to claim their aid.¹⁷
- Why is the BIR handling the SBWS program when it is beyond the jurisdiction of the revenue-collecting agency? Should not the DTI, in coordination with the DOLE, be the lead agency in such a program of subsidizing the small business industry?¹⁸

Continued Transportation, Repatriation, and Mobility Assistance to Health Workers Frontliners, OFWs, Stranded Passengers, Foreign National in the Country, and Other Entities

- Considering that GCQ will be implemented in some areas, we must assess the impact on social distancing before we allow transportation services to

¹² Sen.Lacson (Annex G, p. 4)

¹³ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 4)

¹⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 2) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 18)

¹⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 6) and Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 2)

¹⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 6) and Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 2)

¹⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 2)

¹⁸ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 2)

operate, especially during rush hours and formulate directives and guidelines on the resumption of the mass transportation system.¹⁹

- Safe travel using public transportation will continue to be an issue. Emergency pathways or bike lanes should be created in preparation for the “new normal”. Many people are already walking or biking since it is free and accessible, while also promoting good physical and mental health. Biking is also an eco-friendly and sustainable form of transportation with no harmful emission. Social distancing is likewise easier to maintain while on bike or on foot. A network of emergency pathways will provide an immediate way for medical staff, grocery attendants, security, and others to commute to work.²⁰

Other Assistance to MSMEs and Productive Sectors (p. 5)

- Based on the report, out of the targeted 40,000 marginalized and small farmers and fisherfolks, only 777 availed of the zero-interest loan program under the Expanded SURE Aid and Recovery Project. What is the reason for the low availment?²¹
- DA must strengthen coordination with LGUs in reaching out to marginalized and small-scale farmers and fisherfolks, most specially in far flung areas.²²
- DA can just convert the lending programs into straight subsidy projects akin to its ongoing financial assistance effort of giving a one-time aid amounting to P5,000.00 each to small rice farmers.²³
- DTI, DA, DICT, and other related agencies should consider providing non-cash assistance to MSMEs, particularly, guidance on initiating online operations and on utilizing delivery services to cope with social distancing requirements.²⁴

Access to Agri-Fishery Products and Ensuring Uninterrupted Supply Chain (p.5)

- How many LGUs and/or national government agencies have made direct purchases from farmers or fisherfolk organizations in addressing the food requirements of affected residents in lockdown areas?²⁵
- Provide an update on the progress of the implementation of DA’s Urban Agriculture Program. How many individuals and communities received the vegetable seeds, starter kits, and livestock?²⁶

¹⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 7), Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 2)

²⁰ Sen. Cayetano

²¹ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, pp. 3)

²² Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 1)

²³ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 2)

²⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 2)

²⁵ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 3)

²⁶ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 3)

- How many fish farmers were provided fingerlings, seedstock, and seaweed propagules?²⁷
- It would be good to include the food outlook or inventory in the weekly IATF and OP reports for the information of the public, and to allay any fears over food shortage. It will also allow the government and the production sectors concerned to address any present and future insufficiencies.²⁸
- The DA should present its plans to address the imbalance in food supply and demand as a result of the limitations in transportation and operations. For instance, it was reported that there is an oversupply of pork in Visayas and Mindanao, and the DA is being urged to bring in the surplus pork to Luzon to boost the inventory of supermarkets where the ECQ is ongoing.²⁹
- Aside from monitoring where bottlenecks are located, the national government, with the cooperation of businesses concerned, should also consider new supply chain technologies to improve visibility across the end-to-end supply chain of essential goods. Traditional linear supply chain model is transforming into digital supply networks.³⁰
- DOF, DOTr, DTI and all other stakeholders should reopen consultations on the regulations of surcharges levied by international shipping lines.³¹

Protection of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) (p. 6)

- The next report should provide updates on the implementation of the Interim Rules on Parole and Executive Clemency, including the number of PDLs who have applied and those who have been granted parole or executive clemency.³²
- DOJ and DILG must detail how the outbreak at the Cebu City Jail is being managed.³³
- As for the previous request last week related to the order of the Supreme Court for lower courts to consider releasing on bail some overstaying detainees, and to provisionally dismiss cases where there is failure to prosecute, we are still awaiting the report of the DOJ about the steps, if any, that the Department is taking in this regard, in coordination with the courts.³⁴

²⁷ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 3)

²⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 2)

²⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 3)

³⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 3) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, pp. 17-18)

³¹ Se. Angara (Annex D, p. 3) and Sen. Cayetano

³² Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 2) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 11)

³³ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 3)

³⁴ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 3)

Assistance to Other Sectors and Partnership with LGUs (p. 8)

- DSWD should issue guidelines on the validation of beneficiaries and inclusion of barangay frontliners under the SAP.³⁵
- DILG may create a scoreboard and incentive system for LGUs vis-a-vis their compliance with quarantine measures and other special duties.³⁶

Assistance to Students, Educators and Educational Institutions (p. 8)

- Enhance coordination of DepEd, CHED, DICT and other government agencies in the rationalization of programs in preparation for online learning and education for students, and provide detailed information on the same.³⁷
- CHED can give guidance to all private and public higher education institutions to end the current semester or equivalent academic period by April 2020 and adopt a “pass” or “drop” grading system.³⁸
- As for the basic education sector, note that there is Senate Bill No. 1452 which aims to authorize the Secretary of Education to open the school year at a later date in case of a declaration of state of emergency, state of calamity, or similar occurrence.³⁹

Continuing Efforts on Information Dissemination (p.9)

- The DOH should identify and address the possible sources of inconsistencies in COVID-19 data reporting, both in the national and local levels.⁴⁰
- To ensure that advisories on social distancing and basic prevention measures reach barangays, the DILG may consider posting the same in conspicuous places and establishments, and have public announcements/infomercials via local radio stations and local cable TV stations.⁴¹
- In the government’s website on COVID-19, the PCOO could consider adding a menu on “online services” under the “information” section. This will include links to accredited websites, as well as apps, that could be useful to the public. Among the links that could be included are those related to telemedicine, contact tracing, and RapidPass for frontliners. The DICT is also urged to consider crafting a widget for all government websites to back link to the COVID-19 portal.⁴²

³⁵ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 1)

³⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4)

³⁷ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 2) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 11)

³⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 11)

³⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 11)

⁴⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 3) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 7)

⁴¹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 3) and Sen. Cayetano

⁴² Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 7)

- In preparation for GCQ, IATF and DOH should also consider hiring professionals to produce multimedia advertisements that will further promote our *bayanihan* spirit and sense of volunteerism.⁴³

II. SECURE FACILITIES AND RESOURCES FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR AND OTHER FRONTLINERS (p.9)

Human Resources for Health (p.9)

- How many additional healthcare professionals were already deployed? Does the DOH have a plan on how to hire an additional 15,757 healthcare professionals?⁴⁴
- President Duterte ordered FDA and DOST to work 24 hours amid the COVID-19 pandemic. How many additional medical technologies, health care professionals, and other staff are needed in order to comply with the said order?⁴⁵
- We propose to expand the duration of engagement of temporary healthcare frontliners from 3 months to a period between 5 to 10 months because according to PIDS' projections, the pandemic may reach its peak anytime from July 2020 to July 2021.⁴⁶
- The DOH should be tasked to fast track all phases of engagement of HRH, and proceed with a sense of urgency.⁴⁷

Referral Hospitals and Equipment by the Numbers (p.9)

- IATF should come up with guidelines on directing neighboring LGUs to assist those LGUs which have shortage in hospital and ICU beds. Aside from a probable redirection of resources, what are the steps being done to prepare for the projected surge in the number of COVID cases?⁴⁸
- Although the Report stated that there is at least 1 COVID-referral hospital in every region, it should be noted that at present, there are 24 provinces and 2 cities in Metro Manila, which do not have Level 2 or 3 hospitals. What is the DOH's plan for these areas?⁴⁹
- The report stated that we only have 1,381 mechanical ventilators in the whole country. The DOH should prioritize the acquisition of ventilators, especially

⁴³ Sen. Cayetano

⁴⁴ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 4)

⁴⁵ Sen. Cayetano

⁴⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 3)

⁴⁷ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 3)

⁴⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4)

⁴⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4)

since it is already reported that the DBM has released the SARO to procure 1,500 more units.⁵⁰

Provision of Healthcare Resources, Supplies, and Equipment (p.9)

- The next report should include a proper accounting of PPEs that show the inflow and outflow of PPEs, detailing the beginning number of PPEs, the number of PPEs distributed to hospitals, and the new PPEs received as donations or procured at the end of the set period.⁵¹
- DOH must submit a Needs Assessment in Case of an Outbreak or a Second Wave of Infections of 1) Bed Capacity; 2) Isolation Facilities; 3) Health Personnel; 4) Hospital Equipment; and 5) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Health Personnel vis-à-vis their Current Status.⁵²
- PhilHealth should provide the breakdown of the Php 10.075B it released to healthcare institutions, specifying the amount released per hospital, the date disbursed, the basis for the release, and other relevant information.⁵³
- PhilHealth should also provide Congress with a report on its total available funds, as well as the amount it can spend for assistance to COVID-19 patients.⁵⁴
- We reiterate our request that PhilHealth should give a target date for the full release of the Php 30B COVID-19 funds to various hospitals.⁵⁵
- It is again submitted that Philhealth's full financial risk protection for COVID-19 patients should be extended up until the State of Emergency on COVID-19 is lifted. Otherwise, Philhealth will be unduly discriminating against those who were confined after such a date of coverage, 14 April 2020.⁵⁶
- How do we rationalize the amount provided for COVID-19 patients vs the amounts provided for all other life-threatening diseases?⁵⁷

Updates on Test Kits, Testing Centers and Expanded Testing (p. 12)

- We reiterate our call for DOH to expedite the accreditation of testing centers, especially in Visayas and Mindanao and to provide other plans on increasing the testing laboratories, considering that more testing laboratories have recorded exceeding daily testing capacity.⁵⁸

⁵⁰ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 3)

⁵¹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 3), Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 4), and Sen. Cayetano

⁵² Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 1)

⁵³ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 5), and Sen. Cayetano

⁵⁴ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 19)

⁵⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 5)

⁵⁶ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 19)

⁵⁷ Sen. Cayetano

⁵⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 4)

- The DOH should provide an updated list of accredited mass testing facilities established by LGUs and other agencies, and the actions taken to expedite the process of accrediting testing centers and providing technical assistance to LGUs.⁵⁹
- Based on the Report, a new COVID-19 laboratory equipment capable of 45,000 tests per day is currently being set up at Jose B. Lingad Memorial General Hospital in Pampanga. When will this be operational?⁶⁰
- How many individuals were tested since the start of targeted expanded testing on 14 April 2020? Is the DOH still within its timeline of administering 8,000 tests per day by the end of April?⁶¹
- As previously raised, more granulated data on mass testing (e.g. tested patients' area of resident, age, gender, pre-existing conditions), which includes the sample size indicating the base number (denominator) to be broken down into whether the patient tested is Suspect, Probable or Confirmed, is needed in order provide an accurate picture of the spread of the virus.⁶²
- DOH announced that it would prioritize testing individuals with suspected and probable cases. DOH Central, however, has not provided a national total and comprehensive estimates on suspected and probable cases. Thus, we reiterate our call for DOH to start moving towards testing even those who are asymptomatic⁶³
- The mass testing effort should be matched by a massive sequencing of the genetics of COVID-19 so that we can map its spread and detect mutations accurately. The government should appropriate the needed amount in order to carry out the massive genome sequencing.⁶⁴
- DOH should work on speeding up its reporting of confirmed cases to determine if the ECQ has a positive effect and provide an explanation as to why there is a backlog of over 1,000 positive cases yet to be confirmed.⁶⁵

COVID-19 Bed Capacity and Quarantine Facilities (p. 12)

- As proposed under Senate Bill No. 1442 or “An Act Providing for the Establishment and Operation of Additional Quarantine Stations, Grounds and Anchorages in All Strategic Areas throughout the Country”, additional quarantine facilities under DOH must be established but they need to be

⁵⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 2)

⁶⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 4)

⁶¹ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 4) and Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4)

⁶² Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 1) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 7)

⁶³ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 2) and Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 4)

⁶⁴ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 8)

⁶⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

strategically located and have the necessary equipment that is not only specific to COVID-19 but also for other infectious diseases.⁶⁶

- Considering that all quarantine facilities in NCR can only accommodate about 1,600 patients, DPWH and BCDA should continue converting facilities into isolation centers especially in Metro Manila.⁶⁷
- Based on the Report, 4,400 OFWs were accommodated by hotel quarantine facilities. We hope to see an update on this data, as well as the total number of hotels secured by the DOT and BOQ.⁶⁸
- More quarantine facilities may be needed in Region II in anticipation of suspected COVID cases because its evacuation centers are at 68% capacity.⁶⁹
- Does the government have any plans to convert any viable government facility in CAR and BARMM into a quarantine facility?⁷⁰

Strengthening Contact Tracing Measures (p. 14)

- When is the target date for the launch of FASSSTER, *TanodCOVID*, and *StaySafe.ph* applications? The succeeding reports should detail where these technologies have been deployed and how they are being used.⁷¹
- We reiterate our call for a unified contact tracing platform to be deployed by IATF for better consolidation, monitoring, dissemination, and handling of private data collected.⁷²
- IATF should clarify which department is in charge of contact tracing because it appears that responsibility over this has been transferred twice already from the DOH to the OCD and then to the DILG.⁷³
- The national government, through the DOH, should employ a ground level contact tracing measure through the participation of law enforcement agencies.⁷⁴
- The next reports should include updates on contact tracing efforts in terms of how many contact tracing “runs” have been executed; where have these been conducted; how many individuals have been contact traced; what happened to those contacts traced; and what steps the DILG has taken to improve contact tracing in LGUs.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ Sen. Cayetano

⁶⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

⁶⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

⁶⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

⁷⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

⁷¹ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 6)

⁷² Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 6) and Sen. Cayetano

⁷³ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 5)

⁷⁴ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 10)

⁷⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 6) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 1)

Clinical Trials for Treatment Protocols and Vaccinations

- FDA and DOH should start crafting action plans on COVID-19 vaccination, with special attention given to a review of their regulations and the country's manufacturing capacity.⁷⁶
- Updates on clinical trials of various treatments should be included in the reports as well.⁷⁷

III. ESTABLISHING SOUND FISCAL AND MONETARY ACTIONS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS (p. 15)

Fiscal Measures of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) (p.16)

- BSP may look into interest rates that could be lowered so that there will not be any fear of inflation. Reserve requirements should also be lowered further in a bid to increase liquidity, and assure businesses of the availability of credit lines.⁷⁸

Budgetary Measures to Fund COVID-19 Effort (p. 17)

- There was no accounting of public funds in the report. There was no explanation as to: which specific programs, activities, projects were discontinued; what particular general purpose funds were abandoned; what specific GOCC-held money was taken; and, most importantly, how these government funds were actually utilized and liquidated. End-to-end accounting, from fund sourcing, utilization, and liquidation, is a must in future or separate reports.⁷⁹
- The current fiscal position of the government and its whole year projection for 2020 must be included in the next report.⁸⁰
- DBM can look into the possibility of augmenting funds available for the implementation of crucial DOLE programs.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 6)

⁷⁷ Sen. Cayetano

⁷⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 8)

⁷⁹ Sen. De Lima (Annex C, p. 3-4), Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 7), Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 2), Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 4-5), and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, pp. 6-7)

⁸⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 7)

⁸¹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 8)

IV. RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN (p. 18)

Recovery Plan

- Though the Final Report of the TWG on Anticipatory and Forward Planning was submitted, a clear and concrete plan on the next steps after the ECQ is still necessary in any crisis situation. Thus, the IATF should still identify its concrete plan of action and strategies on recovery.⁸²
- There must be a responsive and sustainable means of support and recovery plan which will involve a bottom-up approach to create a convergence with the national policies.⁸³
- There is a need to create a National Health Council, as provided for under Senate Bill No. 1443 or the Philippine Health Security Bill, that will review and recommend policies and create an integrated National Action Plan that ensures the capacity of the health system to respond to the current COVID-19 pandemic and in the advent of similar health emergencies and global outbreaks in the future.⁸⁴
- We reiterate our recommendation of creating an Economic Risk Assessment Plan that would tackle the consequences or effects to the economy and recovery measures.⁸⁵
- The IATF must launch an aggressive multi-sectoral information campaign so that the exit plan is coordinated and the people are fully informed, engaged and accountable to live under the new normal.⁸⁶
- As the wearing of face masks becomes part of the Filipino lifestyle under the new normal, the IATF should consider increasing the country's capacity to produce face masks and the rationing of face masks to address any shortages.⁸⁷

Reopening of businesses and other institutions

- The government, in coordination with LGUs, may set out policies and solutions which would allow the operation of various sectors, even in a limited capacity while employing safety measures such as social distancing and mass testing. Also, sectors that should operate (even on a limited capacity)

⁸² Sen. Cayetano, Sen. Binay (Annex A, p.1), Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 7), Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 11), and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 17)

⁸³ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 17)

⁸⁴ Sen. Cayetano

⁸⁵ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 15)

⁸⁶ Sen. Binay (Annex A, p. 1)

⁸⁷ Sen. Binay (Annex A, p. 1) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 18)

must be identified considering their vital role in the supply chain or in the national economy in general.⁸⁸

- Given that construction has already been identified as a permitted activity in the areas under GCQ, it is imperative that the related businesses that form part of the supply chain of this industry is likewise allowed. This would include tiles, glass, hollow block, paint, nails and screws manufacturing, plumbing and sanitary contractors, mechanical and civil works contractors, and other related services.⁸⁹

V. OTHER COMMENTS/CONCERNS

Lack of a National Action Plan

- A National Action Plan has yet to be crafted despite our recommendation prior to the 5th Weekly COVID-19 Report of the President. The National Action Plan should be made public in order to (1) appease the demand for transparency; (2) be used as reference in all policies and decisions to be implemented by agencies in their respective roles in this pandemic; and, (3) be used as a reference in any possible modification of the ECQ. The plan should also identify the specific PAPs, including the budget requirement and the timeline for their implementation. It is also necessary that the expected outputs and outcomes of the PAPs are indicated.⁹⁰

Modified/Extended ECQ

- The National Government should reconsider the modification of the ECQ before it results in irreparable damage as it is highly premature considering the threat of COVID-19. It should publicly provide the criteria to lift or modify the ECQ.⁹¹
- We should ramp up mass testing efforts and conduct relentless contact tracing before the expected relaxation of ECQ on 15 May 2020, or we would risk a second wave of infections.⁹²
- The succeeding reports should include information on whether we have stemmed the spread of COVID-19 and provide indicators to determine our success in mitigating the effects of the pandemic. This will help the

⁸⁸ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 16) and Sen. Cayetano

⁸⁹ Sen. Cayetano

⁹⁰ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, .p 1)

⁹¹ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 14)

⁹² Sen. Cayetano, Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 5) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, pp. 12-13)

government to decide on when to lift the community quarantine and how we will transition to the new normal.⁹³

General Community Quarantine (GCQ)

- How can we be assured that GCQ guidelines will be strictly complied? Will it not be overwhelming for the PNP and the AFP to control and regulate an increased number of the population allowed to leave the premises of their homes? There should be available data as to the estimated number of people who will be allowed to go out in provinces downgraded to GCQ and its ratio to the available PNP and AFP personnel in charge.⁹⁴
- What is the position of DOH and the IATF with respect to the study of UP professors Guido David and Ranjit Singh Rye with research associate Ma. Patricia Agbulos released on April 22 which provides that government officials must only relax quarantine measures if the following have been achieved: (1) access to mass testing facilities with enough capacity and reasonable turnaround time; (2) establishment of an effective and efficient contact tracing system; (3) adequate number of hospital beds, ventilators, health workers, personal protective equipment, and quarantine facilities to accommodate COVID-19 patients; and (4) a declining trend of new cases for a period of 2 weeks, even with mass testing. Were these parameters considered in the previous decision to downgrade several provinces from ECQ to GCQ?⁹⁵
- Has DOH initiated testing for purposes of determining the prevalence of COVID-19 across the country? The importance of knowing our baseline before we open up cannot be over emphasized. This is the data we need to move forward and to assess how and when to open up the economy and allow more movement of people.⁹⁶
- Government should provide justification as to how they perform risk assessment in areas where ECQ has been lifted or modified when there has been no mass testing involved.⁹⁷

Women, Children, and Other Vulnerable Groups

- According to reports, pregnant women were turned away from health facilities and died due to complications. Despite the current pandemic, the government must ensure that mothers have access to basic maternal healthcare and should not be denied admission, that could cost them their lives.⁹⁸

⁹³ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 5)

⁹⁴ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 13)

⁹⁵ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 13) and Sen. Cayetano

⁹⁶ Sen. Cayetano

⁹⁷ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 14)

⁹⁸ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex B, p. 1)

- Violence against women and children is an issue all over the world. Being in the midst of the pandemic does not make it go away. In fact, home quarantine may aggravate the situation for many women and children. Thus, the LGUs, DSWD, and PNP should remain vigilant and adopt measures and guidelines to protect these vulnerable members of our society.⁹⁹
- We reiterate our recommendation that DOH should conduct a nationwide influenza immunization program since the flu will complicate the management of any respiratory infection. We cannot afford a breakout in the midst of this pandemic.¹⁰⁰
- Are there ongoing discussions between DOH and medical societies on how the health needs of vulnerable groups, who have health issues to begin with, will be addressed in the future?¹⁰¹

DSWD and DepEd's Feeding Programs

- 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 continue the said program and if the need arises, this can easily be increased as provided in Sec. 4(v) of the Bayanihan Act.¹⁰²

Mental and Physical Health

- Given the importance of mental and physical health, IATF, DILG, and DOH, should consult cardiologists, endocrinologists, psychologists and other health specialists on safe ways to incorporate outdoor activities for individuals, such as walking, running, and biking, while observing social distancing protocols and without compromising safety. After the general guidelines are issued, LGUs could be tasked with identifying areas where these activities can be done safely.¹⁰³

Immunity Boosters for All Citizens

- Is it possible for the government to provide even healthy citizens immunity boosters? Perhaps such supplements should be included in the relief goods handed out by LGUs.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰⁰ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 18)

¹⁰¹ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰² Sen. Tolentino and Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰³ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 8)

COVID-19 Related Deaths

- COVID-19 related deaths should be further assessed/examined so the government can see the real number of COVID19 deaths.¹⁰⁵

Cremation

- There must be available data on the following: (1) the average number hours it takes for a body to be cremated from the time of expiry; (2) the average number of deaths per LGU; (3) the number of crematorium services available in the LGUs; and (4) the maximum number that can be accommodated daily per LGU.¹⁰⁶
- Updates on the following recommendations relating to the management of COVID-19 fatalities, among others: (1) preparation of an inventory of privately-owned funeral homes/crematoriums to handle the remains of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases; (2) preparation of alternative storage for cadavers in case hospital morgues are filled to capacity; and (3) rehabilitation of non-operational crematoriums in Manila to be environmentally complaint.¹⁰⁷

Observing Maximum Tolerance, Following Legal Procedures in Arrests and Respect for Human Rights

- We urge law enforcement agencies and other government agencies to exercise the highest degree of restraint and to follow valid legal procedural requirements in the conduct of arrests and detentions while implementing the lockdown. We also urge all government agencies to observe and protect the human rights of all.¹⁰⁸
- Similarly, the government must ensure that all our frontline workers are also amply protected from unreasonable aggression.¹⁰⁹

Backup Computer Systems of Key Agencies

- The DICT should look into reports that computer systems for payments to agencies have broken down without any backup.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex E, p. 4)

¹⁰⁶ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 19)

¹⁰⁷ Sen. Binay (Annex A, p. 2) and Sen. Lacson (Annex G, p. 19)

¹⁰⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 10)

¹⁰⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex F, p. 10)

¹¹⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 8)

Funding Research and Development (R&D)

- It is recommended that the Executive earmark at least 5% of the estimated P1.491T total funds needed to address the crisis for R&D efforts, which will help in combating COVID-19.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Sen. Lacson (Annex G, pp. 10-11)