

SENATE'S CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
COMMENTS ON THE 14TH WEEKLY REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT DATED 29 JUNE 2020

I. PROVIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO ALL AFFECTED SECTORS

Update on the Social Amelioration Programs (SAPs) (p. 1)

- The Bayanihan to Heal as One Act has already lapsed and yet we have not completed the distribution of the 1st tranche of emergency cash subsidy. What is the DSWD's plan to finally complete the distribution?¹
- Based on the report, the disbursed amount for the 2nd tranche of AICS-SAP under DSWD is less than 10%, majority of which are 4Ps beneficiaries. Why is there a delay in the implementation of the SAP for non-4Ps? When is the target date for full distribution of the 2nd tranche?²
- In the report, there are 3,858,707 waitlisted beneficiaries for AICS-SAP which are still subject for updating. What is the final number of additional beneficiaries of AICS-SAP in the waitlisted category under DSWD? DSWD should provide the number of waitlisted beneficiaries per province.³
- As previously asked, what is the reason behind the change in the budget allotted for the distribution of the second tranche of the emergency subsidy?⁴
- The report still failed to indicate the total number of beneficiaries who returned their cash aid due to duplication, with a breakdown of the amounts of their respective areas.⁵
- The latest report showed that about 80,000 OFW beneficiaries have not received their cash aid. What is the plan, including the timeline, of the DOLE in reaching these unserved OFWs?⁶
- DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello III mentioned during the hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment, and Human Resources Development last week that the allotted amount for DOLE-CAMP AKAP is not enough. Based on the report, the target beneficiaries for this program is 250,000 OFWs. However, according to Sec. Bello, more than 500,000 OFWs applied for the said program. Are the government economic managers willing to provide additional funding for those OFWs who applied for DOLE-CAMP AKAP in excess of the 250,000 target beneficiaries?⁷

¹ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 1)

² Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 1), Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 1), and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2)

³ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 1), Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2), and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 1)

⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 1)

⁵ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2)

⁶ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 3)

⁷ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, pp. 1-2)

- As previously suggested, TESDA scholarship programs should be made available and accessible to the affected workers in order to retool, reskill or upskill them to new jobs post-COVID-19.⁸
- How is the national government assisting LGUs which are struggling to complete the liquidation of the SAP payout?⁹

SAP for Small Business (p. 2)

- With the unemployment rate reaching 17.7% as of April 2020, which is equivalent to 7 million unemployed Filipinos, we reiterate our recommendation to continue the CAMP wage subsidy alongside the SWBS Program in order to cover a wider population in the labor sector.¹⁰
- Under the COVID-19 Assistance to Restart Enterprises (CARES) Program, the Small Business Corporation has released PhP 1.7 Million covering 13 accounts. Are these 13 accounts enough to handle the disbursed amount? How was the amount of PhP 1.7 Million distributed among the said accounts? When do you expect to complete the loan releases under this program?¹¹
- A total of PhP 45.6B subsidies for 2 months have been credited directly to the SBWS program beneficiaries. Will there be another tranche of benefits for SBWS? Will the DOF retain the original target of serving 3.4 million MSME workers under the SBWS Program?¹²
- The Report still failed to include the requested explanation on the results of SBWS Task Force's preliminary matching between the lists from DOLE's CAMP and the SBWS program purportedly showing that around 193,000 out of 680,000 CAMP beneficiaries are also SBWS recipients. What has been done on the matter? What remedial measures, if any, have been carried out to prevent further leakage or waste of resources?¹³
- Of the PhP 203M budget for the implementation of Livelihood Seeding Program-Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay Program, only 30.55% or PhP62.02 million has been downloaded to the provincial offices of the DTI. What is causing the slow utilization? DTI should expedite the release and utilization of the funding for the said program to immediately restart operations of microentrepreneurs.¹⁴
- DOLE reported that more than 3,000 establishments nationwide have permanently closed, affecting 90,000 workers. What are the remedial measures implemented by concerned agencies to rescue other SMEs that are trying to stay afloat amid this pandemic? Has a survey been conducted to determine their funding requirements to enable them to reopen?¹⁵

⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 15)

⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 2)

¹⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p.15)

¹¹ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 1)

¹² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 1) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

¹³ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 3) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 1)

¹⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, pp. 1-2)

¹⁵ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 2) and Sen. Cayetano

- In addition to our previous recommendation to relax stringent tax regulations on small businesses during the height of the pandemic, we hope that the government can make loan assistance programs more accessible to them as they get back on their feet.¹⁶

Transportation, Repatriation, and Mobility Assistance to Healthworkers, Frontliners, OFWs, Stranded Passengers, Foreign Nationals in the Country, and Other Entities or Individuals (p.3)

- Based on the Report, the MMDA's Bicycle Lending Program has provided 106 bicycles for frontliners and 10 bicycles for hospitals. MMDA should provide more details on the said program. How many bicycles can MMDA provide?¹⁷
- What are the measures being undertaken by the DOTr in reducing the volume of locally stranded individuals (LSIs) in ports and airports? We also request that the Philippine Port Authority provide enough facilities within our ports for stranded passengers while waiting for the resumption of their trips to the provinces.¹⁸
- To reiterate, we note that there has been an increasing number of confirmed cases in provinces, like Marawi City, as a result of the Balik Probinsya Program. We hope that the government will have a concrete plan to ensure that those returning to the provinces are properly isolated and tested prior to going home to protect the local citizens from potential transmission of the virus. There must also be thorough coordination between the national government agencies and the LGUs on the quarantine and testing of the Balik Probinsya beneficiaries.¹⁹

Protection of Consumers and Related Measures (p. 3)

- Despite the efforts of FDA in inspecting establishment manufacturing masks, PPEs and other related products, there is still a rampant proliferation of counterfeit products in the market. As commented in the previous report, this may pose health risks since such items may have not complied with the safety and minimum health standards set forth by the DOH and FDA. Are concerned agencies able to identify the sources of these fake products? How many have been prosecuted for selling counterfeit and unregistered products?²⁰
- Can the FDA partner with the DTI to ensure that only FDA approved facial masks are sold commercially in the country?²¹

Other Assistance to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and Productive Sector (p. 4)

- For the program intended for MSFFs, the DA indicated that of the PhP1 Billion budget, PhP 1.063 Billion was transferred to their partner lending conduits (PLCs).

¹⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 2)

¹⁷ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 2)

¹⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex D, p. 12-13)

²⁰ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 2)

²¹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 2)

There is a surplus amount of PhP63 Million. Is that figure accurate? More money was downloaded to PLCs than the program budget. If yes, where did the DA-ACPLC get the amount in excess of allocation?²²

- Regarding the problems on identifying beneficiaries for the DA's lending programs and the lack of updated database of MSFFs, we reiterate our concern on how did programs with budgets running in the billions formulated and carried out without the aid of baseline information, i.e, database of intended clientele, and the mapping and identification of program beneficiaries?²³
- DOST should also tap other agencies such as DTI and DA, including private partners and NGOs, to widen the OneStore.ph program's reach.²⁴
- The DA should provide a detailed report on the following:²⁵
 - Breakdown of the amounts granted towards the planting of rice, corn, coconut, and other crops such as peanut, calamansi, and mongo principally produced by small farms to ensure that there is no overconcentration of funding granted to one crop/grain, especially towards crops that have been affected by price depreciation even before the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Breakdown of the amounts granted under different fishery production activities.
 - Breakdown of the amounts granted per region, given that different regions of the Philippines produce different crops.
- Of the 2.5B made available to EXPANDED SURE Aid and Recovery Project, was any amount allotted or disbursed to agricultural cooperatives?²⁶
- Concerned agencies should provide a report on the state of the Philippines' biggest agricultural exports such as plantations of rubber, coffee, oil palm, cacao, banana, and pineapple because their billion dollar contributions to the economy cannot be discounted.²⁷
- Considering that there is proliferation of contract growing schemes for corn seeds, banana, tomato, cucumber, oil palm, asparagus, and broiler chicken in the country, the report should also include details on the assistance given to contract growers.²⁸
- The DA issued Notices of Award to La Filipina Uy Congco Corporation and Atlas Fertilizer for the procurement of 1,811,090 bags of urea fertilizers for PhP1.8 billion under the ALPAS Program (Ahon, Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra COVID-19). However, farmers complained that the bidding price of PhP995.00 was way higher than the prevailing average outlet price of PhP850.00 per bag. Centralization of the bidding should have meant a lower price or at least similar to the prevailing market price. The DA should conduct an inquiry into the alleged

²² Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 3)

²³ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4)

²⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 2)

²⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 3)

²⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 3)

²⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 3)

²⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 4)

overpriced fertilizer contracts which could be grossly disadvantageous to the government.²⁹

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

- In order to address the oversupply of tomatoes and other vegetables, the DA implemented short-term and long-term plans, which include, among others, the adoption of a new planting calendar per cluster/association, and the establishment of several facilities for the semi-processing, composting, packing, and juice processing of vegetables. DA should provide a progress report on these plans for us to gauge its effects in addressing the oversupply of vegetables and also its benefits on our local farmers.³⁰
- Is it possible for the DA to coordinate with the LGUs to let them buy vegetable products and include these in their relief goods being distributed to their constituents?³¹
- Has the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines (CCAP) been approached to provide special rates for chilled and/or frozen food products and for temperature-controlled product storage? They may be able to extend this voluntarily or as a result of incentives from the government. In addition, fruit and vegetable juice processors can also be approached to ramp up production, voluntarily or incentivized.³²

Protection of Persons Deprived of Liberty (p. 6)

- How many PDLs and BUCOR personnel are confirmed to have COVID-19? Have all the BUCOR personnel and all PDLs in the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) and the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) been tested for COVID-19? Is testing being done in the regional prison facilities? What is the number of COVID-19 deaths in all facilities across the country?³³
- What is the protocol being imposed by the BUCOR regarding the quarantine and treatment of PDLs?³⁴
- According to the Report, as of 17 June 2020, the Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP) granted 221 PDLs and recommended 119 PDLs for executive clemency. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOJ instructed the BPP to expedite the release of, or grant executive clemency to, old and sick prisoners on humanitarian grounds. Concerned agencies should provide continuous updates regarding this matter.³⁵

²⁹ Sen. Marcos (Annex E, p. 1)

³⁰ Sen. Cayetano

³¹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 4) and Sen. Cayetano

³² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 4)

³³ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 4) and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4)

³⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 4)

³⁵ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4)

- The current Report still has no updates on the number of releases from jails and prisons under the control and management of provincial governments and the Bureau of Corrections. What is the progress on this matter?³⁶

II. SECURING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR AND OTHER FRONTLINERS

Human Resources for Health (HRH) (p. 6)

- A group of experts projected that, based on the lower end of the reproduction rate of the DOH's data, COVID-19 cases might reach 60,000 to 70,000 by July 31. Given this scenario, the DOH should provide the required number of healthcare workers, hospitals, critical health care units, and quarantine facilities needed to handle such a possibility. DOH must also submit a matrix of possible increase of the number of cases, the corresponding requirements to efficiently handle such situations, and the current capacity of our healthcare system that may require augmentation.³⁷
- We hope to see the total number of requests the Centers for Health Development (CHDs) receive from private facilities and LGU hospitals in relation to emergency hiring of HRH.³⁸
- The DOH must immediately address the following problems in order to hire more HRH:³⁹
 - Stem out the continued transmission of COVID-19 among healthcare workers to restore their trust and confidence in getting on board for the job posts being offered and assure their safety and welfare;
 - Expedite the release of the Special Risk Allowance (SRA) for DOH personnel; and
 - Rethink the current employment package for health workers.
- As previously commented, DOLE and DOH must provide the affected healthcare workers with: (i) assistance, which could come in the form of DOLE's CAMP-AKAP, and (ii) local employment options in healthcare facilities while the deployment ban is in place, and estimate the number of workers who do not benefit from any of these two. They must also coordinate information and protocols on OFW-HCWs and ensure that returning OFW-HCWs and stranded HCWs are integrated into the DOH health human resource hiring⁴⁰
- As previously commented, DOH should provide data on the number of active cases of healthcare workers with COVID-19, those who are able to recover, and those who have succumbed to the illness.⁴¹

³⁶ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4)

³⁷ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, pp. 4-5) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 7)

³⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 7)

³⁹ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 5)

⁴⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 8)

⁴¹ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 5)

- We reiterate our comment that with the expected increase in cases (partly due to the gradual easing of restrictions), we hope to see a more concrete plan to reduce such risks to our healthcare workers by providing them with adequate PPEs and informing them on the correct protocols to avoid community transmission.⁴²
- We also call on the DOH to consider the recommendation from the University of the Philippines that workers and frontliners, especially healthcare workers who supervise the isolation and quarantine facilities of each LGU be tested regularly regardless of symptoms.⁴³ Similarly, under the recently-filed Senate Bill 1535, or the proposed Crushing COVID Act, we seek to implement mass testing, particularly on the vulnerable sectors of society, healthcare workers, and returning employees.⁴⁴
- With the recent spikes of the virus infection in some places such as Cebu City, the government is planning to augment the health workers assigned to these areas by tapping the Doctors to the Barrios. Will there be an effect in the communities where these doctors are presently assigned?⁴⁵

Referral Hospitals, COVID-19 Bed Capacity, and Equipment (p. 7)

- Out of the 1,888 accepting hospitals, how many are located in Cebu? Is the bed capacity enough considering the recent surge of positive cases in the region? What actions or assistance have been done by the DOH on this matter?⁴⁶
- We also previously requested to see a granulated data of available and occupied COVID-19 beds, by type of hospital across regions. Such information is necessary to assess the health sector's capacity to accommodate cases during the peak of the pandemic and to determine the areas that are most vulnerable to shortage of beds once cases surge.⁴⁷
- In addition, we reiterate our request for a concrete plan on addressing the potential shortage of beds for suspected and probable cases (those with mild or critical symptoms and are yet to be tested or are awaiting conclusive results).⁴⁸

Quarantine Facilities (p. 7)

- We request the Bureau of Quarantine and other involved agencies to issue a report on the 11,160 Returning Overseas Filipinos still undergoing quarantine to know their status and assistance given to them.⁴⁹

⁴² Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 6)

⁴³ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5) and Sen. Cayetano

⁴⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5)

⁴⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 11) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 7)

⁴⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex C, pp. 4-5)

⁴⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 1) and Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5)

⁴⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 1)

⁴⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5)

- We suggest that the DOH, DPWH, DILG, and BCDA identify, as early as possible, the facilities or areas nationwide that could be transformed into regional quarantine facilities, with special focus in areas with highest COVID-19 cases.⁵⁰
- We also recommend maintaining the quarantine facilities and increase the number even more especially those that are located in the central region and in Cebu City as these areas have the highest number of positive cases. It is highly suggested to intensify all the more the isolation facilities in the country to prevent over pooling of patients.⁵¹
- As previously pointed out, there should be a clear delineation of duties among OWWA, DOH, BOQ, DOT, and other government agencies in the management of privately commissioned quarantine facilities.⁵²

Update on Test Kits, Testing Centers, and Expanded Testing (p. 7)

- The DOH is still unable to provide the public with real-time data on COVID-19 cases. For almost a month now, the DOH just reports out “late” cases since it implemented the new classification of COVID-19 cases. Some health and data experts are suspecting the accuracy of COVID-19 data coming from the DOH. What is the DOH doing in response to this? In particular, when will the DOH be able to address the late reporting of cases?⁵³
- As of 30 June 2020, while the DOH portal reports that 47,347 individuals have tested positive for COVID-19, the confirmed cases totaled to only 37,514, showing a lag in the validation of 9,833 cases. This number of backlog is clearly higher than the 1,000 backlogs previously announced by Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque to the media a few days ago. Please provide clarification on this matter.⁵⁴
- Aside from the reason behind the persistent backlog in validating the number of COVID-19 cases, also include information on the regional distribution of such backlog to determine whether validation is a nationwide or region-specific problem.⁵⁵
- Does the DOH have a definite timeline set to fully maximize the reported testing capacity of 42,000 tests per day? We request the DOH to report on the daily testing capacity per region and per province. The UP-OCTA study published last 29 June 2020 presented Harvard University’s recommendation that the ideal daily testing capacity should be 2,500 tests for every death per day.⁵⁶
- Does the DOH monitor the conduct of Rapid Antibody Tests done by the private health facilities such as Maxicare and Hi-Precision to determine if these facilities are strictly adhering to testing protocols and to determine if the pricing of these

⁵⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5)

⁵¹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 5) and Sen. Cayetano

⁵² Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 12)

⁵³ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 6)

⁵⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 5)

⁵⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 5) and Sen. Cayetano

⁵⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 6)

tests are justifiable? Does the DOH have a list of accredited COVID-19 testing centers which uses Rapid Antibody Tests?⁵⁷

- Can the DOH and FDA explain and clarify the recommended use of the approved test kits? What are the 4 approved test kits labelled as “Others” under the 14th Report?⁵⁸
- As previously commented, will the DOH come up with newer guidelines to include the testing of workers in more densely occupied areas such as grocery stores and supermarkets, PUVs, and other service oriented establishments?⁵⁹

Clinical Trials (p. 8)

- Why is hydroxychloroquine, a drug whose usage in Solidarity Trial was terminated by the WHO as of 17 June 2020 still included in the list of treatment regimen, which Filipino patients are enrolled in. Based on the 13th Bayanihan Report (June 22), there are 66 patients under the hydroxychloroquine treatment regime.⁶⁰

Strengthening Contact Tracing Measures (p. 8)

- Based on the Report, there are currently 54,183 members of the contact tracing teams, however, only 22,683 are trained. What is the DOH’s plan to be able to train the remaining 31,500 members as soon as possible?⁶¹
- What is the scope of the training provided to the contact tracing teams? Are they provided with sufficient information/knowledge on how to treat confidential information (e.g. identities of COVID-positive individuals in the locality) while at the same time keeping peace and order and allaying the fears of the rest of the locality?⁶²
- Last 26 May 2020, DOH determined the need for 94,000 contact tracers. However, the DOH and DILG reported that only around 54,000 personnel were tapped to carry out these efforts. What is the reason for the lag in the recruitment and engagement of contract tracers? What is the plan of DOH and DILG to address this immediate concern? What are the factors considered and the process followed, both by the local and national governments, in hiring contact tracers?⁶³
- The DOH said that the Philippines is short of 76,000 contact tracers due to lack of funding. Will the additional 76,000 contact tracers be sufficient to strengthen contact tracing efforts to keep pace with the expansion of testing capacity?⁶⁴
- We note that the StaySafe.ph app and other technology solutions adopted by the different LGUs report data directly to the COVID KAYA Information System. May

⁵⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 6) and Sen. Cayetano

⁵⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 6)

⁵⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 6) and Sen. Cayetano

⁶⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 4)

⁶¹ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁶² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁶³ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 6) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 4)

⁶⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

we know whether the trained DOH personnel for COVID KAYA likewise receive training for the apps that connect to the Information System (ex. StaySafe.ph)?⁶⁵

- The StaySafe website reports 1.2 million registered users with a smartphone. With an estimated of more than 40 million Filipinos accessing the internet using their mobile phones, what is the game plan to penetrate more users? When we say StaySafe is being adopted by LGUs, is the app used and promoted by LGU employees and small communities under them like the barangays, homeowners associations and sectoral associations (youth, seniors, and PWDs)?⁶⁶
- May we be clarified on how contact tracing is done in the locality? Is there an available manual/guidelines on how to carry out DILG's call to trace-isolate-treat-reintegrate in order to provide the local chief executives (down to the barangay level) with a step-by-step guide on contact tracing?⁶⁷
- We note that both Apple and Google introduced updates to mobile phones for contact tracing purposes and considering the adoption of varying digital tools for contact tracing, may we know the safety protocols in place to ensure the privacy of individuals? How do we balance the constitutionally-protected right to privacy and the need to have an effective contact tracing system in place?⁶⁸
- As previously commented, have the digital tools for contact tracing been successful in achieving disease prevention and quick response? If so, can success stories be included in succeeding Bayanihan Reports along with figures per technology used—StaySafe, COVID Tanod, Fasmster, COVID Kaya?⁶⁹
- We reiterate our queries to the DILG on the following: (1) are there guidelines/standards for ensuring that contact tracers do their job well? And (2) how will the DILG/LGUs ensure that contact tracers send their reports in a timely manner?⁷⁰
- To reiterate, we seek to clarify the main reason behind DOH's recent public dissemination efforts calling for recovered COVID-19 patients (as of May 1) to self-report their status. Is this not part of the ongoing contact tracing efforts? Are there issues such as loss or alteration of information that make it difficult or impossible for DOH to reach out to these patients on its own?⁷¹

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

- We urge the DOH donations team to amply allocate kits for returning OFWs for they still pose great risk upon their return to their provinces.⁷²
- We would like to reiterate the urgent need to provide sufficient PPEs to healthcare workers especially to the nurses in Cebu City Hospitals after reports that one of

⁶⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁶⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 12)

⁶⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁶⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 12)

⁶⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁷⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 7)

⁷¹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 9)

⁷² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 8)

the alarming issues they face is the lack of protective gear. What is the action plan of DOH, IATF, and other concerned agencies to address the shortage of N95 masks and other PPEs in Cebu City? Do we have enough supply of PPEs and other medical supplies in the event that more areas will have a surge of COVID-19 positive cases?⁷³

III. ESTABLISHING SOUND FISCAL AND MONETARY ACTIONS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Budgetary Measures to Fund COVID-19 Efforts (p. 11)

- The current Report already included the general breakdown of expenses of the implementation of the Bayanihan law. However, in the case of the DSWD, for instance, it appears that billions of pesos were disbursed but were not spent yet. An additional column showing the utilization of the said amounts allocated / reallocated to the agencies should also be provided.⁷⁴
- What is the item on health communication for the DOH? How come there is no budget allocated for this particular item?⁷⁵
- We reiterate our previous comment and request to be provided with a comprehensive report on the total number of loans and the aggregate sums being borrowed from foreign banks in response to the current pandemic.⁷⁶
- As previously suggested, more detailed information on the discontinued appropriations should be placed in the DBM website.⁷⁷

IV. RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN

Education

- The opening of classes for elementary and high school is set on 24 August 2020. While the period of enrollment was extended until July 15, how many students have already enrolled in public and private schools? How many are expected to enroll given the extension? What are the plans of DepEd with respect to students who have not yet enrolled?⁷⁸
- For those schools located in high risk areas, has DepEd provided them the needed educational materials and equipment such as computers, laptops and allowance for internet connection to teachers? LGUs are also encouraged to allocate funds for children's educational materials and equipment.⁷⁹

⁷³ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 8)

⁷⁴ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 7)

⁷⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 8)

⁷⁶ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 7) and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

⁷⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 8)

⁷⁸ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 3) and Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 10)

⁷⁹ Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 3)

- How does the department intend to provide training to parents in far flung areas?⁸⁰
- There are reports of production of outdated and unauthorized learning materials online. What measures are being done by the DepEd to protect the public from these misleading materials? Were you able to identify or investigate the individuals behind these activities?⁸¹
- Has the department already streamlined the current curriculum to get the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) and make Self Learning Modules (SLMs)?⁸²
- Usual comments and feedback on DepEd Commons is the lack of uploaded materials, low quality materials in terms of content, layout, etc., and the frequent bogging down of the website itself. What changes should we expect as a new school year is about to start in August? How will the department address the issues and problems experienced by the learners and teachers? How will DepEd improve the content of the modules being uploaded on the site? Is there an ongoing system on how to make sure that the materials being uploaded are top quality? If so, why are there complaints being raised?⁸³
- Since it will take 10 months to complete the project that will provide internet connection for 7,000 schools, what is DepEd's plan of action in the meantime? What equipment will the teachers use? How many teachers will receive this service? Is this sufficient to cover the majority of the teachers and schools without equipment and internet connection?⁸⁴
- In addition, DepEd must also present a clear and realistic plan on how it will roll out blended learning in the coming school year, especially with the new school year less than two months away. In a survey conducted by Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA), 35% of students have no access to stable internet; 30% of students have no access to flexible learning materials (both online and offline); 50% of students are struggling to access online learning materials due to connectivity problems; 60% of teachers are skeptical of or resistant to conducting online classes; and 60% of schools are not able to provide training for teachers with regard the conduct of online classes.⁸⁵
- As previously commented, the DepEd should also present a clear plan on the use of radio and television as part of its strategy to deliver education under the New Normal. We recognize that radio and television can be a cost-effective and cheap medium of primary and secondary education especially for public school students who cannot buy laptops and/or tablets.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 9) and Sen. Cayetano

⁸¹ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 9)

⁸² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 9)

⁸³ Sen. Angara (Annex C, pp. 9-10)

⁸⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 10) and Sen. Cayetano

⁸⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, pp. 11-12)

⁸⁶ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

- To reiterate, DepEd should provide a concrete plan and the relevant timelines with regard to the preparation and dissemination of the distance learning curriculum before the opening of schools in August.⁸⁷
- As previously suggested, CHED should fast track the disbursement of the said funds and assist beneficiaries that have difficulty completing the submission of their documents due to the ongoing community quarantine.⁸⁸
- Given the shift to blended learning, we wish to reiterate our call for financial and other forms of support to all institutions of learning to ensure that their faculty, students, and other staff have the appropriate ICT equipment, program, and required software to be able to continue learning in the New Normal.⁸⁹
- As previously commented, DepEd has indicated that pursuant to the general directive of the President, as recommended by the IATF, they are preparing for school resumption without face-to-face classes until a vaccine for COVID-19 becomes available. However, recognizing there is no real replacement for face-to-face learning, DepEd should still be preparing for blended learning/flexible learning modes of delivery that could include smaller classroom sizes or students attending class on a rotational basis and other models, in areas that may be deemed safe. For example, in the case of rotational attendance, what model is being used? If in fact there are also preparations for this, can we get the details? When face-to-face interaction is allowed, most likely it will be done in phases. Thus, the need for DepEd to already include it in their plans.⁹⁰

Assistance to OFWs

- As previously commented, due to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of repatriated Filipinos could reach 100,000 or even higher in the coming months. What is the plan of action of DOLE, OWWA, and other concerned agencies in the foreseen influx of repatriated Filipinos in the country? Are we ready to provide assistance to such a number of OFWs once they arrived in the country? How can DOLE help those non-OWWA members who were repatriated?⁹¹
- As previously requested, we hope to see more detailed figures on OFW repatriation. Specifically, on the following: (i) OFWs currently completing their mandatory quarantine (including the additional quarantine prescribed in their provinces), (ii) those who have completed their mandatory quarantine but are locally stranded due to lack of flights or land transportation, and (iii) those who have successfully returned to their families.⁹²

⁸⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

⁸⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 14)

⁸⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 15)

⁹⁰ Sen. Cayetano

⁹¹ Sen. Cayetano, Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4), and Sen. Angara (Annex C, pp. 5-6)

⁹² Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 3)

- In addition, please provide the number of OFWs who sought assistance for psychosocial or mental health services due to COVID-19 related and the scope of assistance provided.⁹³
- We request that the DOTr, DOLE, and other involved agencies publish a report/timeline on the planned repatriation of about 167,626 OFWs stranded in various countries. We also appeal to the IATF to further increase the limit of OFWs and other overseas Filipinos to be repatriated, so that more individuals could be flown home.⁹⁴
- To intensify the reintegration program of the COVID-19 affected OFWs, 1,953 OFWs mostly from the Middle East have already registered in TESDA Abot OFW online registration. How many OFWs have availed of the STEP or TWSP?⁹⁵
- In line with the Balik Probinsya Program, has the government improved its capability to coordinate with the LGUs on the transfer of OFWs and residents back to their provinces?⁹⁶

Transportation

- On 1 June 2020, the City of Taguig passed an ordinance which creates an Active Transport Office that focuses on promoting biking and increasing bike - friendly spots in the City. With the limited access to public transportation, we call on other LGUs in NCR to enact an ordinance which would promote the use of bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles as a mode of transportation.⁹⁷
- Given the limited transportation, the MMDA and LGUs, in coordination with DPWH and DOTr should expedite the establishment of bike lanes.⁹⁸
- As previously commented, we hope to see a more reasonable transportation plan for workers in light of the limited operations of our mass transport systems. Our transport regulators should be able to make adjustments in their plans and strategies so that our workers will not have to worry about getting to work while maintaining physical distancing.⁹⁹
- With the resumption of PUJ operations in some localities, how many drivers are expected to be back on the roads? We call the DOTr, LTFRB, and LGUs to provide them assistance in order to comply with health protocols. The LTFRB should also ensure the timely distribution of fuel subsidy to all PUJ operators.¹⁰⁰

Employment Recovery Plan

- We hope to see a more comprehensive employment recovery plan which takes into account the specific nature and sector of jobs of displaced Filipino workers

⁹³ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 3)

⁹⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 2)

⁹⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 9)

⁹⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 3)

⁹⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 10)

⁹⁸ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 15)

⁹⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

¹⁰⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 10) and Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, pp. 2-3)

locally and abroad. Considering that this is an emergency, the government has to quickly respond and come up with a plan to reintegrate displaced workers in the labor market.¹⁰¹

Tourism

- We request DOT together with its regional offices to start promoting its local tourism destinations within their regions.¹⁰²
- We also call the DOT to collaborate more with digital technology companies to create digital platforms that would promote virtual tourism. The DOT should also conduct upskilling of our tourist guides to be digitally skilled.¹⁰³
- To reiterate, is there one set of guidelines being issued by DOT for the reopening of tourist sites? One of the recommendations is that safety protocols should be consistent throughout the country so that tourists know what to expect - from arrival in the country to the accommodation and use of facilities.¹⁰⁴
- As mentioned previously, in European countries, domestic and regional tourism is the first step in re-opening the tourism industry. Are there plans in place to do the same in the country? Has DOT identified provinces and/or tourism sites that pose the least risks? For example, destinations that can be explored via land travel through the use of private or hired vehicles or destinations that provide for detached residential facilities to prevent mingling in common areas.¹⁰⁵

V. OTHER CONCERNS / COMMENTS

COVID-19 Fatalities

- What is the government doing to reduce our case fatality rates, especially in areas that recorded fatality rates which are higher than the global average of 4.9%?¹⁰⁶
- While we note that the 13th Bayanihan Report stated that the MMDA conducts daily monitoring and coordinate with LGUs, hospitals, and crematoriums regarding COVID-19 deaths, there still remains no update on our previous request for the number of individuals tagged as suspect and probable cases who have died without being tested yet for COVID-19. Moreover, MMDA only covers LGUs in Metro Manila. Thus, there is no indication of any similar efforts being done in other parts of the country.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 8)

¹⁰² Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 8)

¹⁰³ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 9)

¹⁰⁴ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰⁵ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁰⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 5)

¹⁰⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 6)

Assistance to Women, Children and Other Vulnerable Groups

- We would like to reiterate our request for updates on the government's efforts in cracking down cybercrime activities, especially those that adversely affect women, children and other vulnerable groups? What are the status of the cases and actions taken by concerned agencies on reported violations on women and children rights?¹⁰⁸
- As mentioned in our last submission, WHO has published guidelines for health facilities on maintaining essential services during the pandemic, including for newborn care, as experts have also investigated the risk of COVID-19 being transmitted to babies during breastfeeding. Has DOH been able to monitor whether public and private hospitals and other health facilities are following the said guidelines? What other measures are in place to ensure maternal and child care during this pandemic?¹⁰⁹
- As previously commented, DOH stated that even before the COVID-19 pandemic started, we already have enough supply of vaccine for the expanded program on immunization. However, due to the pandemic, parents are scared to bring their children to health centers for vaccination. What is the DOH doing in order to continue the immunization program despite the scare brought by COVID-19? How many children were vaccinated during the start of the quarantine period? How much is the decrease as compared to the percentage of children vaccinated before the lockdown started?¹¹⁰
- Based on reports, the DOH has asked the Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC) to review the National Immunization Program (NIP), particularly the Pneumococcal Vaccination Program for children. When will HTAC come up with its recommendation on this matter?¹¹¹
- In a recent Senate hearing, the plight of children with special needs was discussed. Many have not had access to health care, therapy, and their other needs. Other vulnerable groups are certainly experiencing the same. Perhaps this can be brought to the attention of LGUs so that jeepneys can be hired to shuttle those with special needs to their doctors appointment and the like.¹¹²

Asymptomatic Individuals

- To reiterate, we hope that the official DOH portal and the Bayanihan Report also include updates on the current number of asymptomatic patients with confirmed COVID-19 cases and the number of confirmed COVID-19 patients who are currently recovering. Among others, such information can help assess potential shortage in the available facilities.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 4)

¹⁰⁹ Sen. Cayetano

¹¹⁰ Sen. Cayetano

¹¹¹ Sen. Cayetano

¹¹² Sen. Cayetano

¹¹³ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 9)

PhilHealth and other DOH matters

- To reiterate, how many of the over 19,000 active COVID-19 cases in the country are currently admitted in hospitals and how are they broken down into direct and indirect contributors of PhilHealth?¹¹⁴
- As previously requested, Philhealth should also provide a breakdown of the funds it released to healthcare institutions, specifying the amount released per hospital, the date disbursed, the basis for the release, and other relevant information.¹¹⁵
- What is the status of the investigation conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman on the alleged anomalies committed by DOH officials, including Sec. Duque, in handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?¹¹⁶

Telehealth

- To reiterate, how many telehealth companies are able to provide free primary care consultations on COVID-19? In the past month, how many patients or calls have these telehealth partners, including DOH's hotlines, accommodated in total? Is the total capacity of these hotlines adequate?¹¹⁷

Mental Health

- Considering the fear and anxiety associated with the pandemic, we reiterate our request to know how the National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) Crisis Hotline has been effectively utilized. Specifically, we hope to know the number of confirmed COVID-19 patients, suspected and probable cases, and persons under monitoring provided with psychological first aid and processing to address their mental health needs.¹¹⁸

Testing of Employees

- As previously commented, the government should provide assurance to employers and employees that proper government assistance, with regard to testing of employees, will be given, especially as most of the country shifts to GCQ or MGCQ.¹¹⁹

DOLE Health Protocols

- To reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 upon implementation of GCQ, we recommend that DOLE coordinate and monitor all establishments, especially those that recorded poor compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS) in the most recent DOLE inspections, and ensure that they are aware of the proposed protocol for screening employees and visitors. We also hope that DOLE will provide a clearer set of guidelines on the safety and

¹¹⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 9)

¹¹⁵ Sen. Cayetano

¹¹⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex C, p. 11)

¹¹⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 11)

¹¹⁸ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 135)

¹¹⁹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 12)

health protocols that must be adhered to at this time.¹²⁰

National Action Plan

- We would like to follow up the submission of the “National Action Plan” to the Senate, which was promised during the Committee of the Whole Hearing, as well as the revisions made on the said plan in light of the lifting of lockdowns.¹²¹

Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations (POGOs)

- It has been reported that two major POGO companies formally left the country. PAGCOR CEO Andrea Doming claimed that 30,521 Filipinos are affected by the said closures. Did the BIR verify the said number of affected Filipinos? How much is the outstanding tax liability of the two POGO companies? If none, how much taxes have they paid to the government?¹²²
- We reiterate our disagreement with the decision of the IATF-EID or Task Force on classifying the POGO as members of the BPO sector. On 5 May 2020, we sent a letter to IATF-EID but we have yet to receive any response.¹²³
- Consistent with our earlier recommendation to adopt a sectoral policy in gradually lifting the lockdown, it is our humble opinion that POGO not only do not have significant contribution to the economy, they also pose serious threat to our country’s efforts to flatten the curve of transmission of SARS-COV-2. Thus, allowing them to re-open at this time, when there is still very little testing done, is ill-advised.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 14)

¹²¹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 15)

¹²² Sen. Dela Rosa (Annex A, p. 2)

¹²³ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 14)

¹²⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex D, p. 14)