

RECORD OF THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1999

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 3:29 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Blas F. Ople, called the session to order.

The President. The 26th session of the Second Regular Session of the Eleventh Congress is hereby called to order.

Let us all stand for the opening prayer to be led by Sen. Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng.

Everybody rose for the prayer.

PRAYER

Senator Coseteng.

Banal na Ama, dinggin Mo po ang aming pagsusumamo. Bigyan kaming Iyong grasya at patnubay upang sa ganoon ay manatili kaming karapat-dapat na mga anak Mo na handang manungkulan nang buong-puso at katapatan sa sambayanang nagtitiwala sa amin.

Pagkalooban Mo po rin kami ng lakas na makaiwas sa mga patibong sa aming matagumpay at taos-pusong paninilbihan.

Ang pagiging makasarili, ang pag-aakala na kami ay nakakaangat sa iba, ang pag-aabuso sa posisyon na aming kinalalagyan, ang pagkutya at pagmamaliit sa di namin mga kapanalig, ang pagbibingi-bingihan at pagbubulag-bulagan sa tunay na hinaing at pangangailangan ng bayan.

Alam po namin na ang landas tungo sa kabanalan ay mahirap tahakin, lalo na ngayong panahon na hitik sa katiwalian at korapsiyon, na kadalasan ang salapi ay makapangyarihan at nabibili ang sinuman at ano mang bagay upang ang kasinungalingan ay magmistulang katotohanan.

Ipinagdarasal din po namin ang kaligtasan ng libu-libong manggagawang Pilipinong nasa Taiwan, na ang ilan ay nasalanta at nasugatan dahil sa katatapos pa lamang na lindol. Nawa ay malasap nila ang Iyong mapaghimalang kalinga at makatikim ng tulong mula sa kinauukulan iyong mga nagnanais na makauwi nang matiwasay sa piling ng kanilang mga mahal sa buhay.

Pagpalain Mo po kami, Diyos Ama, upang kami ay maging matatag at tapat sa aming sagradong kasunduan—

sa Iyo at sa inang bayan ngayon at magpakailanman.

Siyanawa.

ROLL CALL

The President. The Secretary will please call the roll.

The Secretary, reading:

Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta	*
Senator Robert Z. Barbers	Present
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon	Present
Senator Renato L. <i>Compañero</i> Cayetano ..	**
Senator Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng ..	Present
Senator Franklin M. Drilon	Present
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile	Present
Senator Juan M. Flavier	Present
Senator Teofisto T. Guingona Jr.	Present
Senator Gregorio B. Honasan	Present
Senator Robert S. Jaworski	Present
Senator Loren B. Legarda-Leviste	Absent ***
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr.	Present
Senator John Henry R. Osmeña	*
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III	Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr.	Present
Senator Ramon B. Revilla	Present
Senator Raul S. Roco	Present
Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago	Absent ***
Senator Vicente C. Sotto III	*
Senator Francisco S. Tatad	Present
The President	Present

The President. With 16 senators present, there is a quorum. The Majority Leader is recognized.

THE JOURNAL

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of Session No. 25 on September 21, 1999 and consider it approved.

The President. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

THE JOURNAL (Consideration Deferred)

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, the *Journal* for our session on Monday, September 20, 1999 is still being revised pursuant to

* On official mission

** On official mission but arrived after the roll call

*** On account of illness

The Secretary.

September 16, 1999

The Honorable
BLAS F. OPLE
President of the Senate
Financial Center
Pasay City 1308
Metropolitan Manila

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on September 15, 1999 elected Representatives Oscar S. Moreno, Robert Ace S. Barbers and Benjamin S. Lim as additional members of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 7550, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE TERMS, CONDITIONS AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS OF REGIONAL OR AREA HEADQUARTERS, REGIONAL OPERATING HEADQUARTERS, AND REGIONAL WAREHOUSES OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 226, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OMNIBUS INVESTMENTS CODE OF 1987,

and Senate Bill No. 1591, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE TERMS, CONDITIONS AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS OF REGIONAL OR AREA HEADQUARTERS, REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS, AND REGIONAL WAREHOUSES OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 226, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OMNIBUS INVESTMENTS CODE OF 1987.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General

The President. Referred to the Committee on Rules

BILL ON FIRST READING

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 1727, entitled

AN ACT REDUCING TO TEN PERCENT (10%) THE AMUSEMENT TAX ON GROSS RECEIPTS FROM ADMISSION OF THEATERS, CINEMAS, CONCERT HALLS, CIRCUSES AND OTHER PLACES OF AMUSEMENT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 140 OF R.A. NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla

The President. Referred to the Committee on Rules

COMMUNICATION

The Secretary. Letter from Director Aurora T. Aquino of the Office of the President of the Philippines, transmitting to the Senate a certified copy of Memorandum Circular No. 42, entitled

DIRECTING THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CONCERNED TO EXTEND MAXIMUM SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO THE INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN OF THE METROPOLITAN MANILA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MMDA) RELATIVE TO MMDA REGULATION NO. 99-004, ENTITLED "REGULATION GOVERNING PROPER REFUSE MANAGEMENT AT SOURCE IN METRO MANILA AREA AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

The President. Referred to the Committees on Public Information and Mass Media; and Environment and Natural Resources

Senator Drilon. Mr. President.

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

BILL ON SECOND READING

**S. No. 468--Public Employment Service
Office Act of 1998
(Continuation)**

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 468 as reported out under Committee Report No. 66.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 468 is now in order.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, we are in the period of cosponsorship. For this purpose, I move that we suspend the session for one minute to allow the Senate President to take the floor.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the session is suspended for one minute.

It was 3:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:41 p.m., the session was resumed with the Hon. Juan M. Flavio presiding.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. The session is resumed.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, may I ask that the Senate President be recognized to deliver a cosponsorship speech.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. The Senate President, Sen. Blas F. Ople, is recognized.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR OPLE

Senator Ople. Thank you, Mr. President.

Just a year ago, I was the guest of honor at an industrial jobs fair organized by the Public Employment Service Office in Calamba, Laguna. This was a joint project of the local government units and the Department of Labor and Employment. Two thousand job vacancies were immediately snapped up by as many job applicants, most of them recent high school or college graduates.

About 200 employers from the entire Calabarzon region, many of them foreign joint ventures, took part in that activity. The workers were happy; the employers were happy. There were no losers. Everybody came out a winner.

Mr. President, without the intervention of a public employment service, both the employers and the workers would have relied on blind chance to be matched to each other. Very often, applicants would be harrying politicians like ourselves for letters of recommendation. With the institutionalization of the public employment service, which is contemplated in this bill, Senate Bill

No. 468, otherwise known as the PESO bill, the matching of men and jobs ceases to be a matter of blind chance or of political brokerage, and becomes a meaningful public service.

It is for that reason that I take pleasure and pride in cosponsoring this measure with the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development, Sen. Francisco S. Tatad.

Mr. President, as many developing nations have learned from experience, employment is not something that automatically comes with economic growth. We need competent public mechanisms to bring about a meeting of men and jobs. We need to build up institutions that can help the unemployed find remunerative jobs and that will help employers find the skills they need to be productive and competitive.

Such a nationwide employment service network contemplated in this bill should also grow into a mechanism to narrow the gap between employment and the educational system. Too often our schools produce graduates for jobs that do not exist. There must be a steady feedback from the labor market on the educational system so that we know what educational courses are relevant to the job market and which are not. This PESO bill will also meet that need, Mr. President.

In the Medium-Term Comprehensive Economic Development Plan of NEDA, which is the major source of policy guidance for our budgetary priorities, there is a conspicuous absence of an employment plan.

There seems to be no effort to integrate our employment objectives into the economic plan. With the passage of this bill, a mechanism will be created that will have the capability to input into employment planning as an integral part of the National Development Plan.

These are just some of the reasons, Mr. President, jointly with the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development, I would like to urge my colleagues in the Senate to support this bill which, incidentally, has already passed on Third Reading in the House of Representatives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 468

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, Sen. Loren Legarda-Laviste has manifested her intention to deliver likewise a

cosponsorship speech, for which reason we could not commence with the period of interpellations on this measure.

I therefore move to suspend consideration of this bill.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

BILL ON SECOND READING

S. No. 1271--Professional Regulation Commission Act
(Continuation)

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 1271 as reported out under Committee Report No. 25.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 1271 is now in order.

Senator Drilon. We are still in the period of interpellations. May I ask the Chair to recognize Sen. Anna Dominique M. L. Coseteng, the principal sponsor.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. Sen. Anna Dominique M. L. Coseteng is recognized.

Senator Coseteng. Mr. President, distinguished colleagues, at the outset, I would like to recognize the presence in the Session Hall of the Professional Regulation Commission officials headed by Chairman Hermogenes Pobre, Commissioner Dela Rhea Tan and Associate Commissioner Abad.

I believe that from where we left off, Mr. President, we were in the period of interpellations.

Senator Drilon. Yes, Mr. President. For that purpose, may I ask the Chair to recognize Sen. Raul S. Roco for two or three questions.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. Sen. Raul S. Roco is recognized.

Senator Roco. Mr. President, may I ask questions in support of the lady senator's sponsorship?

Senator Coseteng. Yes, Mr. President.

Senator Roco. We are very happy that the lady Senator has reformed the original request of our colleagues on the licensing. I understand from the present draft that relicensing of teachers is no longer required.

Senator Coseteng. For the moment, Mr. President, there has been a moratorium on the CPE as a prerequisite for the renewal of licenses.

Senator Roco. But the continuing education, of course, will be there. As mentioned in a special law, the teachers themselves may take special examinations for promotion purposes. Is this correct?

Senator Coseteng. That is correct, Mr. President, under Republic Act No. 7836.

Senator Roco. And this was the major concern that both the lady senator and this representation shared. Since this has been addressed by the present bill, the status of the other professionals and their continuing education or their tests can be treated as the committee sees fit. But we are very happy to support the bill in view of that concern for the teachers.

I will just ask the lady senator to ask the staff if there may be a special law on this licensing. I suspect we could not find any. But just in case there is, then we address it in the amendatory section.

Senator Coseteng. Mr. President, Executive Order No. 266 requires all professionals to comply with a certain number of units before their licenses could be renewed. This is done over a period of three years.

Before this bill was sponsored on the Floor for deliberation, such was the practice. However, the Professional Regulation Commission decided to hold a moratorium pending the approval of this bill because we have realized that this was a very unfair situation where professionals were required to attend seminars, conventions, et cetera, as a prerequisite for the renewal of their licenses. We are not anti-CPE or Continuing Professional Education. We are leaving that to the individual boards. What we are removing is the fact that it used to be a prerequisite for the renewal of license, Mr. President.

Senator Roco. So we are leaving a flexibility provision to the PRC and the concerned board will fully remove the possible abuse that may arise from the executive order. There may have been instances, in fact, where inadvertently some professions suffered.

But because of all these modifications, Mr. President, we are very happy to support the lady senator's bill.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator Coseteng. Thank you, Mr. President.