

TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2000

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(S. No. 1595 - Integrated Solid Waste Management
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(S. No. 1168 - Prohibiting the Use of Hard Surfactants)

Sponsorship by Senator Magsaysay
(Consideration Suspended)

Convention, should come into play perhaps at a later time. I would like to suspend my interpellation for now, but I would like to reserve my right to come back and interpellate on another date. Thank you.

Senator Leviste. Yes, Mr. President. The toxic waste issue is covered, as mentioned by another law. And this would also cover hazardous and nuclear waste and that is in RA No. 6969. This bill which we are presently studying covers only solid waste. It does not cover the nonhazardous and toxic waste.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, in view of the reservation made by Senator Osmeña and Senator Pimentel, I move that in the meantime we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 1595.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. Before we act on the motion, Senator Magsaysay wishes to manifest a reservation.

Senator Drilon. No, Mr. President. He is just getting ready to sponsor another bill.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. Our apologies.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 1595

Senator Drilon. So, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 1595.

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

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I know the hour is getting late, but with the indulgence of our colleagues, there are few items which we would like to finish just for sponsorships and simple resolutions.

SPECIAL ORDER

So with the indulgence of our colleagues, I move that we transfer from the Calendar for Ordinary Business

to the Calendar for Special Orders Committee Report No. 188 on Senate Bill No. 1168, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE MANUFACTURE, IMPORTATION,
DISTRIBUTION AND SALE OF LAUNDRY DETERGENTS
CONTAINING HARD SURFACTANTS, AND PROVIDING
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREFOR

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

BILL ON SECOND READING

S. No. 1168 -- Prohibiting the Use of
Hard Surfactants

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we consider Senate Bill No. 1168 as reported out under Committee Report No. 188.

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

Consideration of Senate Bill No. 1168 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the bill without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 1168, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE MANUFACTURE, IMPORTATION,
DISTRIBUTION AND SALE OF LAUNDRY DETERGENTS
CONTAINING HARD SURFACTANTS, AND PROVIDING
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREFOR

The following is the whole text of the bill:

insert

Senator Drilon. To sponsor the measure--a short sponsorship speech, I understand--Senator Magsaysay requests to be recognized.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. Senator Magsaysay is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR MAGSAYSAY

Senator Magsaysay. Thank you, Mr. President. This is very short, entitled "Banning the Hard Surfactants: In Honor of Mother Nature."

Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Trade and Commerce, I have the honor of sponsoring the legislation which will seek to prohibit the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of laundry detergents containing hard surfactants. The measure is serialized as Senate Bill No. 1168, principally authored by the Senate Majority Leader, the Hon. Franklin Drilon, and embodied under Committee Report No. 188.

The Committee recommends the bill's enactment based on the following reasons:

The legislation is consumer and environment-friendly. All of us are cognizant of the value of laundry surface active agents or surfactants as the primary cleaning ingredients of laundry products. The component is important as it removes and separates dirt and causes lathering and sudsing, making it easier to wash the clothes. However, the benefits delivered using hard surfactants, in terms of clean clothes, may be negated by the surfactants' harmful effects to the environment. Hard surfactants are considered as the least biodegradable among other surfactants being used today. It is a major source of marine and aquatic pollution.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources emphasized during the public hearing that the banning of laundry detergents containing hard surfactants will be beneficial to the country. The department stated, and I quote, "the continuous use of hard surfactants may

eventually lead to the death of the country's water resources and result in the extinction of aquatic life." The DENR position was supported by a study conducted by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) citing that all major rivers in Metro Manila have exceeded the environmental quality standard maximum limit for detergent pollution and that these levels are already toxic to fish and other aquatic life.

The bill is consistent with the mandate of the 1987 Philippine Constitution declaring that, "the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature." (Article II, Section 16)

The prohibition on the use of hard surfactants will encourage the use of biodegradable substitutes like our very own coco-chemicals. This will provide additional uses for, and increase the value added of our coconut products. Note that with the increase in the domestic use of coconut oil, replanting of coconut trees will be necessary. This is good for the Philippines as the bigger hectarage of our lands are suited for this type of agricultural produce.

There is overwhelming evidence that hard surfactants are ecologically disastrous. To date, sixty one (61) countries have already imposed a ban on the use of hard surfactants in consumer detergents. The countries included the United States of America, United Kingdom, Japan, France, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, India and Australia.

Aside from the most important provision of this bill, that is, the omnibus banning of laundry detergents containing hard surfactants, the bill is highlighted by other key points such as:

1. The mandatory requirement that all laundry detergents must be labelled with a statement that the product does not contain hard surfactants;

2. The Bureau of Product Standards under the Department of Trade and Industry is being empowered to impose administrative sanctions and to enforce, in full effect, the statute once enacted;

Mr. President, hard surfactants may appear to be a cheaper raw material and hence, economically more attractive, but we cannot allow it to take its toll on the environment. We simply cannot allow the deterioration of our ecology and the wastage of our water resources in exchange for a cheaper raw material. Our people, in the promotion of their health, have the right to live in a pleasant environment, free from pollution and "in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature."

The present constitutional provision on ecological protection was submitted and defended by then Con-Com Commissioner and now Senate President Blas F. Ople, rationalizing that the charming phrase can lend beauty to the Constitution. The same intent is shared by this sponsor and the various nongovernmental organizations supporting this legislation, including the Soap and Detergents Association of the Philippines, the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (COCAP), the United Coconut Association of the Philippines, Lapiang ng Mamimili at Maliliit na Negosyante sa Pilipinas, the various ecology-based NGOs, and the DTI and the DENR which dream of imprinting the significance of environmentalism for the generations of Filipinos to come. Thank you, Mr. President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. Thank you, Senator Magsaysay.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 1168

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 1168. The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavio]. Is there any objection to the motion to suspend consideration of

Senate Bill No. 118? [Silence] There being none, the motion is approved.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. Before we do that, may the Chair manifest its desire to be counted as coauthor of this important bill, including the other senators who are here. They may please raise their hands to be included.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR FLAVIER

(All Senators Present in the Hall be Made Coauthors of S. No. 1168)

Senator Drilon. Yes, Mr. President. And all those present in the Hall--Senator Tatad, Senator Guingona, Senator Jaworski, Senator Serge Osmena, are made coauthors of Senate Bill No. 1186.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. It is noted.

BILL ON SECOND READING

S. No. 1746 - Absentee Voting by Qualified Filipinos Abroad

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we consider Senate Bill No. 1746 as reported out under Committee Report No. 75.

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

Consideration of Senate Bill No. 1746 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the bill without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Flavie]. The Secretary will read the title of the bill.

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 1746, entitled