

RECORD OF THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1999

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 3:48 p.m., the Senate President Pro Tempore, Hon. John H. Osmeña, called the session to order.

The President Pro Tempore. The 32nd 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. Francisco S. Tatad.

Everybody rose for the prayer.

PRAYER

Senator Tatad. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, so often have we offered You polemic and platitude in place of prayer. Open our hearts and minds and still our lips so that we may listen and learn from You the true meaning of prayer.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

The President Pro Tempore. The Secretary will please call the roll.

The Secretary, reading:

Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta Present
Senator Robert Z. Barbers Present
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon Present
Senator Renato L. Compañero Cayetano . Present
Senator Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng .. Present
Senator Franklin M. Drilon Present
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile Present
Senator Juan M. Flavir Present
Senator Teofisto T. Guingona Jr. Present
Senator Gregorio B. Honasan Present
Senator Robert S. Jaworski Present
Senator Loren B. Legarda-Leviste Present
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. Present
Senator John Henry R. Osmeña Present
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. *

* On official mission

Senator Ramon B. Revilla Present
Senator Raul S. Roco *
Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago Present
Senator Vicente C. Sotto III *
Senator Francisco S. Tatad Present
The President Absent **

The President Pro Tempore. With 18 senators present, there is a quorum.

THE JOURNAL

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of the previous session and consider it approved.

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

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

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

The Secretary will now read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 1747, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING THE FILIPINO
CHILDREN FROM MALNUTRITION
INSTITUTIONALIZING FOR THIS PURPOSE
"THE MILK FEEDING PROGRAM";
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Magsaysay Jr.

The President Pro Tempore. Referred to the Committees on Health and Demography; Youth, Women and Family Relations; Ways and Means; and Finance

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 1748, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT
THROUGH VETERANS BONDS OF ARREARS

** On account of illness

ENSURE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF DRUG TESTING PROGRAMS.

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

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we consider on Second Reading Senate Bill No. 1735 as reported out under Committee Report No. 69.

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

Senator Drilon. May I ask the Secretary to read the title of the bill.

The President Pro Tempore. Is this Senate Bill No. 1734?

Senator Drilon. It is Senate Bill No. 1735.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The President Pro Tempore. *Walang kopya ang Secretariat.*

The session is suspended, if there is no objection. *[There was none.]*

It was 5:22 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President Pro Tempore. The session is resumed.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I committed an error. My notes were not correct. The reference should be to Senate Bill No. 1734, and not 1735. I was reading from the agenda which has a typographical error. I apologize.

BILL ON SECOND READING

S. No. 1734--National Athletes, Coaches and Trainers Benefits and Incentives Act of 1999

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we consider on Second Reading Senate Bill No. 1734 as reported out under Committee Report No. 69.

The President Pro Tempore. Consideration of Senate Bill No. 1734 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. 1734, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING CASH AND OTHER NON-MONETARY BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES TO NATIONAL ATHLETES, COACHES AND TRAINERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The following is the whole text of the bill:

Senate Bill No. 1734

AN ACT GRANTING CASH AND OTHER NON-MONETARY BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES TO NATIONAL ATHLETES, COACHES AND TRAINERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "National Athletes, Coaches and Trainers Benefits and Incentives Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. Statement of Policy. - The State shall promote excellence in sports by providing for the welfare and development needs of national athletes, coaches and trainers competing for the country and particular benefits and incentives for those who have brought honor and recognition by winning awards and prizes in the Olympics, Asian Games, World Cup, Southeast Asian Games, and other regional and world sports competitions.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

a. *National Athletes* - refer to athletes who are Filipino citizens, members of the national training pool, recognized and accredited by the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) and who represent the country in regional or world sports competitions;

b. *National Coaches/Trainers* - refer to coaches/trainers who are Filipino citizens, members of the national

coaches/trainers pool, recognized and accredited by the PSC and who represents the country in regional or world sports competitions as official coaches, trainers to national athletes;

c. *International Championships* - refer to the international sporting championships held as side event or qualifying matches to the Olympic Games;

d. *International Federation* - shall refer to the duly recognized international non-government organizations administering sports at world level and encompassing organization administering such sports at a national level;

e. *International Competitions* - As defined, the term shall pertain to international sports competitions which are recognized by International Sports Federations, recognized international sports federations, such as World Olympics, World Cup, Asian Games, Asian Championships, Southeast Asian Championships, Asian Basketball Cup (ABC).

SEC. 4. *Benefits and Privileges.* - Any national athlete, coach or trainer who is currently registered as such before the PSC shall be entitled to the following:

a. the grant of twenty percent (20%) discount from all establishments relative to the utilization of transportation services, and other lodging establishments, restaurants and recreation centers and purchase of medicine and sports equipment anywhere in the country;

b. minimum of twenty percent (20%) discount on admission fees charges by theaters, cinema houses and concert halls, circuses, carnivals, and other similar places of culture, leisure and amusement;

c. free medical and dental consultations in private or public hospitals and similar establishments anywhere in the country and medical insurance program to be provided by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC);

d. the Social Security System is hereby mandated to formulate at the earliest possible time a comprehensive social security program for national athletes after their tenure from government service;

e. existing livelihood programs being undertaken by various government agencies may be availed by the national athletes and they shall enjoy priority subject to

the guidelines and qualifications by the implementing body;

f. the National Housing Authority (NHA) or the Home Development Mutual Fund shall prioritize in its national housing programs, affordable "pabahay" loans and such other housing opportunities to eligible and deserving athletes.

Such privately-owned establishments shall enjoy tax credits equivalent to the discounts extended to the athletes.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) shall as soon possible provide for the implementing rules and regulations of this Section.

SEC. 5. *Scholarships.* - The winning athlete or any one qualified member of his/her immediate family shall be entitled to scholarship benefits in the form of tuition fees in State Colleges and Universities in order to complete a college or university degree. The winning athlete shall likewise be given priority in the availment of State College and University scholarship grants.

Likewise, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) shall give priority to winning athletes who seek scholarship grants and study under their programs subject to the qualifications for all applicants.

Private colleges and universities shall likewise be encouraged to adopt a similar program in their school for winning Philippines athletes.

SEC. 6. *Retirement Benefits.* - Any national athlete, coach or trainer who has won a championship as defined under this Act shall receive a lump sum amount equivalent to twenty-five percent (25%) of his/her total cash incentives computed from the start of his active sports career as a member of the national training pool up to the day of retirement from active competition. Such lump sum amount shall be extended to the national athlete sixty days after the filing of the retirement papers.

SEC. 7. *Cash Incentives.* - Filipino athletes who have brought honor and prestige to the country by winning gold, silver and bronze medals in the World Olympics, Southeast Asian Games (SEAG), Asia and other World Championship Games shall be entitled to cash awards in the following amounts:

A. Individuals in Individual Competitions

1. For Gold Medalists - Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000.00)

2. For Silver Medalists - Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (P300,000.00)

3. For Bronze Medalists - Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00)

B. Individuals in Team Competitions

1. For Gold Medalists - Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00)

2. For Silver Medalists - Seventy-Five Thousand Pesos (P75,000.00)

3. For Bronze Medalists - Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00)

SEC. 8. *Qualification for Winning Athletes.* - Only athletes duly registered with the Philippine Sports Commission as members of the National Sports Amateur Training Pool, and those who have participated and won in international competitions prior to the creation of the Training Pool under R.A. 6847, shall be entitled to the incentives provided for in this Act: *Provided*, That nothing herein shall prevent any Filipino athlete who have brought honor and prestige to the country, as defined and stated under this Act, to claim any benefits and/or incentives provided hereunder.

SEC. 9. *Incentives for Coaches and Trainers.* - Coaches and trainers accredited with the Philippine Sports Commission or any recognized international coaches association shall also be entitled to cash awards if they have personally trained and rendered service to the athletes at least one (1) year prior to and during the competition wherein the athletes, trained by said coaches or trainer won an award or awards. The individual athlete's certification to this effect shall be in writing.

The incentives for the coaches shall be equivalent to fifty percent (50%), thirty percent (30%) and twenty percent (20%) of the cash awards for gold, silver and bronze medalists, respectively. In case of team events, the coaches shall be entitled to the same cash awards as those given to every athlete or member of the team.

There is hereby created a body to formulate a

system for the accreditation of coaches or trainers. It shall be composed of a representative from the PSC, POC, and at least a professor from the academic community engage in physical education or human kinetics as the third party.

SEC. 10. *Adjustment of Cash Incentives.* - The PSC is hereby authorized to adjust the schedule of incentives in Section 7 hereof, based on studies, consultations and public hearings with relevant agencies: *Provided*, That the adjustment would reflect the economic needs of the athletes: *Provided, further*, That no memoranda, orders, or any issuances shall diminish the prescribed schedule of incentives: *Provided, finally*, That donations and gifts from private institutions or groups shall be construed to be distinct and separate from the cash incentives provided herein.

SEC. 11. *Funding.* - The Cash and Retirement Program under this Act shall be charge to the appropriations of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) under the National Sports Development Fund with initial funding from the Contingency Fund of the Office of the President in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Chairman of the Philippine Sports Commission, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports and the Philippine Olympic Committee, is hereby authorized to promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act not later than sixty days after the approval of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining sections of this Act or the application of such provision or part hereof to other persons or circumstance shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its approval and publication in the *Official Gazette* and/or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, to sponsor the measure, may I ask the Chair to recognize Sen. Robert S. Jaworski.

The President Pro Tempore. Sen. Robert S. Jaworski is recognized.

Senator Jaworski. Thank you, Mr. President.

Before I go to the sponsorship speech, I would like to propose that Senate Resolution No. 537 on the alleged illegal logging activities in Lanao del Sur authored by Senator Honasan, which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, be also referred to the Committee on Local Government because of political implications relative to the ongoing amendments to the Organic Act of the ARMM, and also relative to the ongoing peace initiatives with the MNLF.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we suspend the session for one minute.

The President Pro Tempore. The session is suspended, if there is no objection. *[There was none.]*

It was 5:24 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President Pro Tempore. The session is resumed.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, after conferring with Senator Jaworski, he agreed to defer the earlier motion for the additional referral and we now proceed with the sponsorship of Senate Bill No. 1734.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR JAWORSKI

Senator Jaworski. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, the Committee on Games, Amusement and Sports is honored to submit for the approval of this Chamber Senate Bill No. 1734 under Committee Report No. 69, in substitution of Senate Bill No. 877 authored by Senator Revilla and Senate Bill No. 1253 authored by Senator Sotto and this representation. We have also lifted pertinent sections of Senate Bill No. 1342 of which I am the principal author.

Glory and recognition are bestowed upon a nation during international sporting events. At that particular moment of victory,

those individuals responsible for the achievement of that glory are sojournly raised to the high heavens. Tragically, they are immediately left to fend for their livelihood and existence after fortuitous impairment or eventual retirement. There is, however, the reality that praise cannot feed the hungry, nor serve as panacea for the ill or needy. This, Mr. President, is the framework on the necessity of the passage for this bill.

A wise man once observed that each day is filled with acts of heroism performed by men and women who achieve extraordinary feats and are never properly recognized and rewarded.

Yes, indeed, Mr. President, the world is full of unsung heroes. Even in our own midst, there are quite a number of them. If perchance, one of these days we happen to be around the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, we will notice a tall, gray-haired man who is unable to move his left arm and drags his left foot when he walks. He suffered a stroke some years ago and is now a disabled person both physically and financially.

Almost five decades ago, he was an Asian champion in a track and field event. He brought home the bacon and pride for the country.

And if one happens to be from Bacolod City, there is a P.E. teacher in her sixties stricken with diabetes, presently employed in one of the high schools there. Because of her financial status, she cannot avail herself of decent medical attention. This lady was, at one time, the fastest woman of Asia who won the gold medal in the 100-meter dash in the 1958 Tokyo Asian Games.

Just last week, I found out that one of our outstanding basketball players of the old had spent all his lifetime savings on the medical treatment of his wife who suffered a massive stroke. After having been confined in the ICU for six months, she passed away, leaving him emotionally drained and financially bankrupt. He was a member of the 1958 Tokyo Asian Games basketball team which won the gold medal. He likewise wore the colors of the country in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and the World Basketball Championships in Chile. This hero "at one moment in time," now aged 67, has a hard time making both ends meet. In fact, he might not be able to send an adopted daughter to school this coming second semester.

Surely, there are many more of them, unsung heroes, suffering the same plight.

But it has also been observed that athletes can only be as good as their coaches. Without good coaches who teach with a great amount of patience the basic fundamentals, techniques, and strategies of the sport, the athlete cannot achieve his full potential. One's athletic skill, dedication, professionalism and overall

attitude for excellence are not solely developed internally, rather most of the time refined and perfected by the guidance, instruction and encouragement of good coaches.

I know for a fact that there are national coaches who produced outstanding athletes, who likewise have met the same fate as that of the athletes I mentioned earlier.

It has come to my attention that a former coach and once an outstanding national athlete, who was able to produce several gold medalists in international competitions, is presently wandering somewhere in the Visayas. Sadly, he was never given any assistance and recognition he deserved.

Another coach who produced several gold medalists in international track and field competition died of a crippling ailment without receiving any financial or medical help from the government.

Mr. President, these coaches and trainers who guided our athletic teams in international events are also unsung heroes which Senate Bill No. 1734 under Committee Report No. 69 will attempt to recognize and merit. I believe that the nonchalant attitude adopted by the government towards them has caused unspeakable pain and disappointment.

Mr. President, as a former national athlete and coach, I can speak from experience about the meaning of "hardships" and "sacrifices." The very same struggles are encountered by national athletes and coaches to date. Despite this, they remain undaunted in representing this country with great honor in international competitions. And this much I can tell you: Many, if not most of them, have not been properly rewarded nor acknowledged for their personal sacrifices and contributions.

This measure seeks to remedy this quandary. We propose an entirely different approach. We suggest that we give our budding athletes a career option in sports, so that they will be more motivated to pursue their calling.

As I said earlier, after devoting their youth and energy towards excellence, they are forgotten and left in the cold. Let us give them reason to be proud as they have given us pride. Let us give them honor as they have shown us how to be esteemed. Let us give them dignity, as they have proven that the path to greatness is difficult and sometimes lonely. Let us offer them, especially the emerging talents, an alternative career. "Career," by no means, should not only be a by-word in the corporate world. It should be the new framework of Philippine sports.

Briefly, Mr. President, allow me to cite some of the salient features of the bill:

Retirement benefits for any national athlete, coach, or trainer, who has won a championship;

Scholarship and study grants to the winning athlete or any qualified member of his or her family;

Cash incentives for winning the gold, silver, and bronze medals, as scheduled under Section 7 thereof;

Discounts on the purchase of medicines and availment of certain services while they are members of the national training pool;

Free medical and dental consultations as well as coverage under the Social Security System; and

Availment of existing livelihood programs primarily envisioned to benefit their families.

Mr. President, I respectfully appeal to our colleagues in this Chamber for compassion and understanding. This measure hopes to offer the young athletes, the coaches, and trainers the kind of incentives necessary to attract and motivate the present crop of national talents to excel and give their best while they are still in active competition—the kind of material support that will sustain them in dignity, personal pride, and appropriate social status once they retire. This is the least we can render, and perhaps it is the best promise we can offer our youth. Let us further encourage our potential greatness in sports, by amply rewarding, no matter how minute, the sacrifices made by those unsung heroes by granting the repose due them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, we thank Sen. Robert S. Jaworski for that sponsorship speech and we join him in the hope that this could provide the necessary incentives for our athletes to excel in their chosen profession and avocation.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 1734

Mr. President, to allow our colleagues to prepare for their interpellation, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 1734.

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

SPECIAL ORDERS

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I move that we transfer from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders, Committee Report No. 67 on Senate Bill No. 1695, entitled