



JOINT STATEMENT

July 30, 2019

Legislative Priorities of Business Groups for the 18th Congress

The listed business groups and foreign chambers wish to share with the public their legislative reform priorities for the 18th Congress. These priorities are being submitted to the leadership of the Congress and President Rodrigo Duterte for their consideration and enactment to improve the Philippine economy and its international competitiveness and to increase investment and job creation.

We would like to congratulate the administration and the 17th Congress for achieving a productive partnership that improved the country’s business environment. Among significant reforms enacted in the outgoing Congress were the Agricultural Free Patent Reform, the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the Ease of Doing Business Act, the Institutionalization of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), the National ID system, the Revised Agricultural Tariffication Law, the Revised Corporation Code Act, the first bill of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Package, and the Universal Healthcare Act amendments, among others.

We welcome presidential certification of three important bills to amend the Public Service Act, the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, and the Foreign Investment Act., which failed to pass the Senate for lack of time. These reforms are among the priorities listed below.

Following stakeholder meetings with government agencies and Congress we identified two sets of reforms to support for the 18th Congress, divided into two sets: Priority list A (13 measures) and Priority list B (15 measures.)

Priority list A

1. Public Service Act amendments
2. Train 2: TRABAHO (CIT and FIR)
3. Foreign Investment Act amendments
4. Retail Trade Act amendments
5. Apprenticeship Program Reform
6. Build Operate Transfer Law amendments
7. Freedom of Information Act
8. Bank Secrecy Law amendments
9. Lifting foreign equity restrictions
10. Train 3: Property Valuation and Assessment
11. Train 4: Capital Income and Financial Taxes
12. Open Access in Data Transmission Act
13. Water Department Act

Priority List B

1. Farm Entrepreneurship Act
2. PEZA Act amendments
3. Train 2+: Excise Tax on Alcoholic Beverages
4. Agri-Agra law amendments
5. Holiday Rationalization Act
6. National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority Act
7. National Land Use Act
8. National Traffic and Congestion Crisis Act
9. Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board amendments
10. PhilPorts Act (amend PPA Charter)
11. Water Regulatory Commission Act
12. CAAP Act amendments
13. CA 541 amendments
14. National Transportation Safety Board Act
15. Philippine Airports Authority Act

We convey our support on key provisions of the TRABAHO Bill that are beneficial to our country's economic growth but urge policymakers to review the other conditions that may negatively impact our global competitiveness.

We believe these reforms will generate substantial impact in improving the country's global competitiveness, increasing investment, and making economic growth more inclusive by creating more and better jobs.

Agreed:

Alyansa Agrikultura

American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (AmCham)

Australia-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (ANZCham)

Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP)

Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (CanCham)

European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (ECCP)

Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF)

Information Technology and Business Process Association of the Philippines (IBPAP)

Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines, Inc. (JCCIPI)

Korean Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Inc. (KCCP)

Makati Business Club (MBC)

Management Association of the Philippines (MAP)

Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters, Inc. (PAMURI)

Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines, Inc. (SEIPI)