

01 February 2017

Representative KAKA J. BAG-AO
Chairperson
Committee on People's Participation
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear Representative Bag-ao,

This has reference to House Bill No. 3862 or the "Participatory Reform For Rural Development Act of 2016" and House Bill No. 3429 or the "Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Act of 2016."

The Department of Social Welfare and Development supports the intention of the bills to institutionalize transparency, accountability and citizen's participatory reform in governance. We believe that this intention should be complemented by community organizing as an overarching framework to enable the citizens to identify their needs and goals.

To contribute to the bills' enhancement, may we share with you these comments and recommendations:

1. The Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB) has been replaced by Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities (ADM) Program by virtue of Joint Memorandum No. 1, series of 2016 by the Department of Budget and Management and the Department of the Interior and Local Government. This new initiative is part of the priorities of the new administration to give full support to poor and climate change vulnerable areas so that they may recuperate and contribute to the development of the country.
2. Given this, reference to BUB may already be eliminated. Instead, what should be established is the importance of involving civil society organizations and citizens in the development process thru the Local Poverty Reduction Action Team (LPRAT), Regional Poverty Reduction Action Team (RPRAT) and National Poverty Reduction Action Team (NPRAT) and in clarifying and addressing issues and concerns as part of the Grievance Redress Mechanism.
3. We also took note that the hearing last 25 January 2017 clarified that the purpose of the bills is to encourage maximum participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in policy making and governance, and not to support the transfer of government funds to them. On this, we are of the view that there is no

need for an accreditation process for CSOs to participate in matters of governance and discussion.

4. Under Implementing Rules and Regulations, may we suggest the inclusion of the DSWD in the drafting of the said Rules and Regulations.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
Secretary