



05 January 2018

HONORABLE MAUYAG B. PAPANDAYAN, JR.

Chairperson
Committee on Muslim Affairs
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear Chairperson Papandayan:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) respectfully submits its comments on House Bill No. 5772 that seeks to institutionalize the payment of Zakat by Muslims and the establishment of Bait-UI-Mal to alleviate poverty, promote and accelerate socio-economic development in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM):

1. The creation of a new office whose programs and services are already being carried out by various government agencies would entail additional expenses. We would recommend instead the strengthening of the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) to implement the provisions of the bill. Pursuant to the NCMF's Charter, it is authorized, subject to existing auditing rules and regulations, to give grants-in-aid out of its appropriations or other appropriate funds to cooperating government agencies for such programs, projects or services and other forms of assistance for the socioeconomic upliftment of Muslim Filipino communities.
2. The Department appreciates the recognition being accorded to it by the bill. However, may we emphasize that it is not a financial nor a revenue collecting agency but a social service institution.
3. The provisions of the bill should also cover other parts of the country with significant Muslim population and to increase the Non-Government Organization (NGO) representation into five (5) in the Board of Bait-UI-Mal to be composed of Filipino Muslims themselves.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emmanuel A. Leyco', is written over a horizontal line.

EMMANUEL A. LEYCO
Officer-In-Charge