**OFFICE OF SENATOR CHIZ ESCUDERO**

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH | SB NO. 1470, CR NO. 9

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TRANSCRIPT  

SB NO. 1470, COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 9: AMENDMENTS TO THE SUCS LAND USE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LUDIP) ACT

Mr. President, Honorable Colleagues of this august Chamber:

​As Chairperson of the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education, I rise to sponsor Committee Report No. 9, which recommends the approval of Senate Bill No. 1470, entitled, “An Act Strengthening the Mechanisms for Land Use Development and Infrastructure Planning and Budgeting for State Universities and Colleges, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 11396, Otherwise Known as the “SUCs Land Use Development and Infrastructure Plan (LUDIP) Act.”

Universities are bastions of strategic visions. But they cease being academic citadels once they become bastions of planning myopia.

Our SUCs cannot claim to be schools of – and for – the future, if they themselves cannot imagine what they will become five or 10 years from now.

They should be the last to fall prey to the bureaucratic culture which resorts to the ad hoc and prizes the band-aid, and whose planning platform largely follows the election calendar.

They should be the last to be afflicted with the handicap we see in many public offices of not being able to see beyond three years, of collapsing all programs within one electoral term, and of favoring the quick-gestating to the grand.

Amidst these, state universities and colleges—or SUCs, should champion long-term planning, generational projects, and programs that seamlessly transcend administrations, for these are what a make a nation great.

But to do the above, they should be able to practice what they preach.

They should hoist themselves up as examples of strategic planning that spans years, instead of merely lurching from one fiscal year to another, with no grand picture to guide them along.

This bill mandates SUCs to each craft a Land Use Development and Infrastructure Plan every – and valid for – five years.

This blueprint can be an SUC’s syllabus for progress.

By identifying key result areas, priorities are set, resources are channeled to where they can be most impactful, and progress is measured.

Hindi bara-bara. Hindi bahala na. Hindi bukas na.

Having this plan also benefits national government, including Congress, because in the annual identification of projects to be funded under the GAA, for example, there will already be a menu to choose from.

This takes the whims out of appropriating funds, and allows virtuous projects chosen by the community to take precedence over vanity projects fancied by the powerful few.

By linking land, infrastructure, and capital outlays to the goals set by the SUC for itself, taxpayers’ money is properly invested and is expected to yield high social returns for the community and country.

The bill seeks to amend Republic Act 11396, or the SUCs Land Use Development and Infrastructure Plan Act, by effecting the following changes:

* Mandate SUCs to prepare and implement a LUDIP that includes all land use and priority infrastructure projects to be implemented within five years.
* Require the governing boards of the SUCs to review and update their respective LUDIPs every five years.
* Establish an Inter-Agency Committee to monitor the implementation of land use and infrastructure projects of the SUCs. This shall be composed of the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education, and the Secretaries of Budget and Management, Public Works and Highways, and Socioeconomic Planning; and
* Direct the CHED to prepare a comprehensive five-year LUDIP and submit the same to Congress and other agencies concerned to serve as a guide in the annual allocation of funds for SUC infrastructure projects on an annual basis.

As we all know, SUCs require many of their students to write and defend a thesis before they can graduate.

As we funnel tens of billions of pesos to SUCs yearly, this LUDIP is in effect a thesis submitted by the SUCs to all their stakeholders that proves their proficiency in strategic planning and in the stewardship of funds.

Mr. President, let us pass this bill.