AIRs - LM in Philippine Politics and Governance
Quarter 1: Week 10 - Module 10
The Philippines is a republic with a presidential form of government wherein power is equally divided among its three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

One basic corollary in a presidential system of government is the principle of separation of powers wherein legislation belongs to Congress, execution to the Executive, and settlement of legal controversies to the Judiciary. The Legislative branch is authorized to make laws, alter, and repeal them through the power vested in the Philippine Congress. This institution is divided into the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the Philippine government seeks to act in the best interests of its citizens through this system of checks and balances. As a HUMSS practitioner, these principles of co-equal and coordinate powers of the three branches of the government will enlighten you in dealing with the ideals of democracy and fairness.

In this particular learning material, you will be provided with knowledge on the legislative branch of the government and the different roles and responsibilities of the Philippine Senate and the House of Representatives.

What do you expect to learn?

After studying this module, you are expected to:

- Differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the Philippine Senate and the House of Representatives
- Define legislative power under a presidential form of government like the Philippines
- Discuss the lawmaking process
- Draft a simple ordinance that would address the perceived need and problem of your barangay
Activity 1. What I Think about

Directions: List down related terms and concepts on LEGISLATIVE inside the text clouds below. Refer to the rubrics below for scoring each cloud. (20 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Well written and very organized. Clear and concise statements. Excellent effort and presentation with detail.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Writes fairly clear. Good presentation and organization. Sufficient effort and detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Minimal effort. Fair presentation. Few supporting details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat unclear. Shows little effort. No organization of thoughts. Confusing and choppy, incomplete sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lacking effort. Does not address topic. Very unclear. Limited attempt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For you to understand the lesson well, do the following activity. Have fun!
Legislative power

According to Section 1 of Article VI of the 1987 Philippine Constitution: “The legislative power shall be vested in the Congress of the Philippines which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives, except to the extent reserved to the people by the provision on initiative and referendum.”

The legislative power is vested in a bicameral body, the Congress of the Philippines, which is composed of two houses -- the House of Senate (upper chamber) and the House of Representatives (lower chamber). The Legislative Branch enacts legislation, confirms or rejects Presidential appointments, and has the authority to declare war. The Congress of the Philippines is the country’s highest lawmaking body.

- **Senate** –The Senate shall be composed of twenty-four Senators who shall be elected at large by the qualified voters of the Philippines, as may be provided by law.

The qualifications to become a senator, as stipulated in the constitution, are:

1. a natural-born citizen of the Philippines;
2. at least thirty-five years old;
3. is able to read and write
4. a registered voter; and
5. a resident of the Philippines for not less than two years before election day.

It is worthy to note that the composition of the Senate is smaller in number as compared to the House of Representatives. The members of this chamber are elected at large by the entire electorate. The rationale for this rule intends to make the Senate a training ground for national leaders and possibly a springboard for the presidency. It follows also that the Senator, having a national rather than only a
district constituency, will have a broader outlook of the problems of the country, instead of being restricted by narrow viewpoints and interests. With such perspective, the Senate is likely to be more circumspect, or at least less impulsive, than the House of Representatives.

- **House of Representatives**— The House of Representatives shall be composed of not more than two hundred and fifty (250) members, unless otherwise fixed by law, who shall be elected from legislative districts apportioned among the provinces, cities, and the Metropolitan Manila area in accordance with the number of their respective inhabitants, and on the basis of a uniform and progressive ratio, and those who, as provided by law, shall be elected through a party-list system of registered national, regional, and sectoral parties or organizations.

Meanwhile, the constitution provides for the following criteria to become a member of the House of Representatives:

1. a natural-born citizen of the Philippines;
2. at least twenty-five years old;
3. is able to read and write; and
4. except the party-list representatives, a registered voter and a resident for at least one year in the district where s/he shall be elected.

The district congressmen represent a particular congressional district of the country. All provinces in the country are composed of at least one congressional district. Several cities also have their own congressional districts, with some having two or more representatives.

The party-list congressmen represent the minority sectors of the population. This enables these minority groups to be represented in the Congress, when they would otherwise not be represented properly through district representation. Also known as party-list representatives, sectoral congressmen represent labor unions, rights groups, and other organizations. The party-list representatives shall constitute twenty per cent of the total number of representatives including those under the party list. For three consecutive terms after the ratification of this Constitution, one-half of the seats allocated to party-list representatives shall be filled, as provided by law, by selection or election from the labor, peasant, urban
poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and such other sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector.

**Legislative process**

Congress is responsible for making enabling laws to make sure the spirit of the constitution is upheld in the country and, at times, amend or change the constitution itself. In order to craft laws, the legislative body comes out with two main documents: bills and resolutions.

*Resolutions* convey principles and sentiments of the Senate or the Representatives. These resolutions can further be divided into three different elements:

- **joint resolutions** — require the approval of both chambers of Congress and the signature of the President, and have the force and effect of a law if approved.
- **concurrent resolutions** — used for matters affecting the operations of both chambers of Congress and must be approved in the same form by both houses, but are not transmitted to the President for his signature and therefore have no force and effect of a law.
- **simple resolutions** — deal with matters entirely within the prerogative of one chamber of Congress, are not referred to the President for his signature, and therefore have no force and effect of a law.

*Bills* are laws in the making. They pass into law when they are approved by both houses and the President of the Philippines. A bill may be vetoed by the President, but the House of Representatives may overturn a presidential veto by garnering a 2/3rds vote. If the President does not act on a proposed law submitted by Congress, it will lapse into law after 30 days of receipt.

Legislators grouped in committees conduct hearings and consultation meetings to improve or pass a proposed bill. Those outside the group can also discuss any proposed bill in plenary before it is voted upon.

These debates during plenary are very important because they ideally give a chance for others to scrutinize the proposed bill before it is passed. Once approved,
a law can affect not just the government’s function but the life of every Filipino. It is also vital that it adheres to the Constitution.

Here are the various steps in the passage of a bill:

1. **First Reading** - Any member of either house may present a proposed bill, signed by him, for First Reading and reference to the proper committee. During the First Reading, the principal author of the bill may propose the inclusion of additional authors thereof.

2. **Referral to Appropriate Committee** - Immediately after the First Reading, the bill is referred to the proper committee or committees for study and consideration. If disapproved in the committee, the bill dies a natural death unless the House decides otherwise, following the submission of the report.

3. **Second Reading** - If the committee reports the bill favorably, the bill is forwarded to the Committee on Rules so that it may be calendared for deliberation on Second Reading. At this stage, the bill is read for the second time in its entirety, together with the amendments, if any, proposed by the committee, unless the reading is dispensed with by a majority vote of the House.

4. **Debates** - A general debate is then opened after the Second Reading and amendments may be proposed by any member of Congress. The insertion of changes or amendments shall be done in accordance with the rules of either House. The House may either "kill" or pass the bill.

5. **Printing and Distribution** - After approval of the bill on Second Reading, the bill is then ordered printed in its final form and copies of it are distributed among the members of the House three days before its passage, except when the bill was certified by the President. A bill approved on Second Reading shall be included in the calendar of bills for Third Reading.

6. **Third Reading** - At this stage, only the title of the bill is read. Upon the last reading of a bill, no amendment thereto is allowed and the vote thereon is taken immediately thereafter, and yeas and nays entered in the journal. A member may abstain. As a rule, a majority of the members constituting a quorum is sufficient to pass a bill.

7. **Referral to the Other House** - If approved, the bill is then referred to the other House where substantially the same procedure takes place.

8. **Submission to Joint Bicameral Committee** - Differences, if any, between the House's bill and the Senate's amended version, and vice versa are
submitted to a conference committee of members of both Houses for compromise. If either House accepts the changes made by the other, no compromise is necessary.

9. **Submission to the President** - A bill approved on Third Reading by both Houses shall be printed and forthwith transmitted to the President for his action - approval or disapproval. If the President does not communicate his veto of any bill to the House where it originated within 30 days from receipt thereof, it shall become a law as if he signed it. Bill repassed by Congress over the veto of the President automatically becomes a law.

**How important is the lawmaking function of Congress?**

- It passes laws that regulate the conduct of and relations between the private citizens and the government.

- It defines and punishes crimes against the state and against persons and their property. It determines the taxes people should pay for the maintenance of the government.

- It appropriates the money to be spent for public purposes.

- It can reorganize, create, or abolish offices under the civil service.

- And it can create and abolish courts, except the Supreme Court.

- Finally, it is only Congress which was given by the Philippine Constitution the sole power to declare war and to authorize the President - in case of national emergency or war - to issue executive orders embodying rules and regulations intended to carry out the national policy.

**Other responsibilities**

Aside from lawmaking, Congress is also given several powers and responsibilities in certain situations.

Congress’ role in exacting accountability is crucial as legislators play a part in checking on possible excesses by the executive and judicial branches of government.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides many instances when Congress can invoke this power:
1. **Congress has the power to remove from office impeachable government officials**, including the President, Vice President, members of the Supreme Court, members of constitutional commissions, and the Ombudsman. The House of Representatives can tackle impeachment complaints and submit the resolution setting the Articles of Impeachment. The Senate, meanwhile, decides on cases of impeachment in a full-blown trial.

2. **Congress has the “sole power to declare the existence of a state of war,”** according to Section 23 Article VI of the Constitution. A vote of two-thirds of both Houses, voting separately, is needed.

3. **Congress can revoke the President’s proclamation of martial law** by a vote of at least a majority of all members of the Senate and the House. If requested, Congress can also extend the period of martial law beyond the mandated 60 days.

4. **Congress may authorize the President to exercise powers** to carry out a declared national policy “for a limited period and subject to restrictions” in times of war or other national emergency.

5. **Congressional committees can conduct hearings “in aid of legislation”** on various issues that affect the nation and release a report based on findings. For example, the Senate committee in August 2018 conducted a hearing on the TRAIN law’s impact on inflation amid rising prices of commodities.

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**Explore**

Here are some enrichment activities for you to work on to master and strengthen the basic concepts you have learned from this lesson.

**Activity 1: Is it True? Is it False?**

**Directions:** Identify whether the following statements are true or false. Put a check mark (√) inside the box of the correct answer and if the statement is false, put a
check mark inside the third column and identify the term/phrase which makes it false. Inside the fourth column, provide the correct phrase/ correct phrase which will make the statement true. (20 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False (Identify the term/phrase which makes the statement false.)</th>
<th>*If False, provide the correct phrase/concept.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The legislative power (in the Philippine government system) is vested in a unicameral body.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The legislative power (in the Philippine government system) is stipulated in Article VII of the Philippine Constitution.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Congress of the Philippines is composed of two houses; the House of Senate and the House of Congress.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Congress of the Philippines is the country's highest lawmaking body.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The House of Senate is composed of twelve Senators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Congress has the sole power to declare the existence of a state of war.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Congress can not extend the period of martial law beyond the mandated sixty (60) days.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The House of Representatives decides on impeachment cases in a full-blown trial.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2: Come Across and Down!

Directions: Identify the term/concept described by the hints given across and downward. Take note of the correct spelling and number of the letters of the word to fit in the puzzle accordingly. (16 points)

Across:
1. ____________ (2 letters)
2. a representative of the minority sectors
3. laws in the making
4. final signatory of a bill for it to become a law
5. a representative of a congressional district
6. ____________ (9 letters)
7. convey principles and sentiments of the Congress

Down:
1. ____________ (8 letters)
2. Senate
3. Representative
4. ____________ (6 letters)
5. ____________ (6 letters)
6. ____________ (7 letters)
7. ____________ (10 letters)
8. ____________ (11 letters)

Activity 1: Senate vs. Representative

Directions: Identify the differences of the two houses of Congress (Senate and Representatives) based on the categories from the first column. (20 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>Representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deepen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of members</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area of jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 2: How does a Bill become a Law?**

**Directions:** Complete the flowchart of how a bill becomes a law based on the legislation process in the Philippines. Write a brief description for each step. (20 points)
**Activity 3: I can be a Legislator too!**

**Directions:** By now, you have learned that making enabling laws is the main function of the legislative branch of the government. You can also act as a lawmaker in this activity! Complete the table below as your guide in drafting your self-crafted law (ordinance) to be hypothetically implemented in your barangay. Refer to the rubrics below for scoring each item. (20 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guide Questions</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify one <strong>problem</strong> in your barangay that needs immediate solution. (What is the most pressing problem in your barangay? How long has it been a problem? Why do you think it’s important to address it immediately?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Draft a <strong>solution</strong> to the identified problem above. (What are your proposed method/steps to solve the problem? How will you solve the problem? Who are the concerned parties?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify sanctions. (What are the punishments for violating such proposed ordinance?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Draft a catchy title for your proposed ordinance. (How will your ordinance be titled?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<td>3</td>
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12
Complete the following article that summarizes the description of the legislative branch and the qualifications to become a member of the Congress. (10 points)

According to Article 1.______ Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution, legislative power shall be vested in the Congress of the Philippines, which shall consist of the houses of 2.__________ and 3.__________ . The Senate shall be composed of 4.__________ Senators who shall be elected at large by the qualified voters of the Philippines, as may be provided by law; the House of Representatives shall be composed of not more than 5.__________ (unless otherwise fixed by law), 6.__________ percent of whom must be Party-list representatives. The qualifications to become a senator, as stipulated in the constitution, are: a natural-born citizen of the Philippines; at least 7.__________ years old; is able to read and write; a registered voter; and a 8.__________ of the Philippines for not less than two years before election day.

Meanwhile, the constitution provides for the following criteria to become a member of the House of Representatives: a natural-born citizen of the Philippines; at least 9.__________ years old; is able to read and write; and except the party-list representatives, a 10.__________ voter and a resident for at least one year in the district where s/he shall be elected.

The 11.__________ function of Congress is very important. It passes laws that regulate the conduct of and relations between the 12.__________ citizens and the government. It defines and punishes 13.__________ against the state and against persons and their property. It determines the 14.__________ people should pay for the maintenance of the government. It 15.__________ the money to be spent for public purposes. It can reorganize, create, or abolish offices under the civil service. And it can create and abolish courts, except the 16.__________. Finally, it is only Congress which was given by the 17.__________ the sole power to declare 18.______ and to 19.__________ the President - in case of national emergency or war - to 20.__________ executive orders embodying rules and regulations intended to carry out the national policy.
**Answer Key**

2. Issue
19. Authority
18. Venue
17. Philippine Constitution
16. Supreme Court
15. Appellate
14. Recess
13. Committee
12. Plenary
11. Hearings
10. Registration
9. Return file (25)
8. Resign
7. Majority Vote (35)
6. Majority present (20%)
5. Two-thirds majority (66.7%)
4. Requisite for (3/4)
3. Senate's Representation
2. Budgetary
1. Vice-Speaker

**Genre**

Approval or Disapproval
- Resigned to the President for the action
- Step 2: Submission to the President
- A committee committee of members
- Advisory to Congressmen
- Step 9: Submission to the President

- When referred to the other House
- Step 7: Referenced to the other House - the bill is read
- Step 6: Third reading - only the title of the bill
- If the bill is distributed
- Each member present in the hall, copy of
- Step 5: Printing and distribution
- Amendments shall be done
- Step 4: Delegation of changes or
- By the committee
- Second time with the amendments proposed
- Step 3: Second reading - the bill is read for the
- Joint Senate and Constitution
- Joint Senate and Constitution
- Step 2: Referenced to Appropriations Committee
- Step 1: First Reading - other House may

Activity 2: How does a bill become a law?

**DEPEN**

8. Prepare
7. Resolution
6. Draft
5. Presentation
4. Approval
3. Confirmation
2. Signed
1. Joint

Activity 2: Come across and down!

**REPRESENTATION**

8. Refer to House of Representatives
7. Prepared, can turn
6. Copy
5. Copy, second (1/2)
4. Copy, for House of Representatives
3. Copy, House of Congress
2. Copy, fill in
1. Copy, submitted, printed, corrected

Activity 1: It means it is false?

**EXPLORE**
References:

Printed Materials:

Rogelio Maguicad (2012) “Politics and Governance”, Rex Bookstore

Links:

https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph
https://pia.gov.ph/branches-of-govt
http://legacy.senate.gov.ph