



***FPI asks government to start getting inputs from industries on trade deal with US***

Domestic manufacturers are asking the government to immediately start an extensive consultation with the different industries to gather inputs for Manila's bilateral trade negotiating strategy with Washington.

Dr. Jesus L. Arranza, chairman of the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), said this will allow the country's trade panel to firm up a negotiating stance that considers the offensive interest of exporters to the US while also ensuring the competitiveness of domestic industries versus American-made products.

"We have to make sure that industries are heard so our defensive and offensive interests are balanced and we need to move fast because President Donald Trump only gave a 90-day window to close a bilateral deal with the US," Mr. Arranza said.

The consultation process, he noted, can start via the submission of position papers of the industry associations indicating their negotiating stance and "wish lists" for incorporation in the notes of the government's trade panel.

For the FPI's part, Mr. Arranza said they are now also urging their member-industry associations to prepare brief and direct-to-the-point position papers and immediately submit them to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to speed up the process.

"We need to hurry because other countries, including our Asian competitors, have started talking to Washington. We don't want our exporters to lose their competitiveness in the US market if we end up not concluding a deal before the end of the 90-day pause on July 8," Mr. Arranza said.

Trump suspended the implementation of his administration's reciprocal tariffs for 90 days to allow time for bilateral negotiations with trade partners. Currently, the US is implementing the baseline 10 percent tariffs. After this period, the Philippines is looking at a 17-percent reciprocal tariff should it fail to close a deal with the US, plus a host of other additional levies, including the so-called Section 232 tariffs.

Mr. Arranza commended the Philippine Association of Battery Manufacturers (PABMA) for taking the initiative of submitting its position to the government via a letter sent to the Office of the President and the DTI.

In the letter signed by PABMA President Jesus R. Montemayor, who is also the president of FPI, the group said it is "ready to provide inputs and even share our views on possible negotiating stance concerning automotive batteries" in case the Philippine and US trade negotiators need to compare tariffs and non-tariff/technical barriers to trade on a per-product basis.

PABMA also indicated that it is open to the idea of having a low applied tariff on US-made automotive batteries in exchange for a reciprocal level of tariff for Philippine-made batteries entering the American market.

"The FPI and its member-industry associations are ready to work with our trade panel to make sure we can come up with a well-balanced negotiating strategy at the soonest possible time," Arranza said.

### ***SEC shifts to fully online company registration process with zero notarization, zero hard copy submission***

Applicants for company registration will no longer have to submit hard copies of physically signed or notarized registration documents, as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) moves to a fully online and paperless company registration process.

The Commission on April 4 issued SEC Memorandum Circular No. 3, Series of 2025, which provides for the Mandatory Use of the SEC Zuper Easy Registration Online (ZERO) in the Registration of Corporations Using the Electronic Simplified Processing of Application for Registration of Company (eSPARC) and One Day Submission and E-registration of Companies (OneSEC) as Portals.

SEC ZERO is an application under eSPARC that eliminates the need for physical signatures and notarization, as well as the submission of hard copies of registration documents.

The system is integrated with the Electronic SEC User Registration Environment (eSECURE), which credentials users before they can access online services of the SEC, and the Electronic Submission Authentication Portal (eSAP), which makes use of one-time passwords (OTPs) to electronically authenticate SEC-required documents, in lieu of conventional paper-based signatures.

Covered applications Under the guidelines, all domestic stock corporations, excluding lending and financing companies, shall be processed through SEC ZERO starting on April 7, 2025. This includes corporations fully owned by Filipinos or those with foreign equity. Meanwhile, all Filipino domestic stock corporations may be processed using OneSEC.

Lending companies, financing companies, and foreign corporations shall use the regular processing under eSPARC for three months after the effectivity of MC 3. Thereafter, the mandatory use of SEC ZERO shall apply to all types of corporations.

### **Registration process**

To register a company, applicants must first create an eSECURE account through <https://esecure.sec.gov.ph/>. The account must undergo the credentialing process to ensure that the one applying for registration is a real person. The system will also be able to validate the Tax Identification Numbers of applicants by cross matching records with the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Once the applicant has an eSECURE account, he will be directed to the eSPARC portal at <https://esparc.sec.gov.ph>. Applicants will then be required to input the company registration details such as company type, company name, office address, capital structure, and officers, among others, across six steps.

Upon completion of the required details, the application will be submitted online. The applicant will receive an email notification that his application has been confirmed, after which the system-generated documents will be ready for authentication of the incorporators and corporate officers.

All incorporators and corporate officers must authenticate the documents through eSAP by using their respective eSECURE accounts. The authentication process involves receiving an OTP to the registered mobile number and email address of the incorporator and corporate officer, who will input the same into the system.

Once the OTP is successfully verified, the system will indicate that the document has been successfully authenticated. This means that the document is already signed.

Only when all incorporators and corporate officers have signed the necessary documents can the applicant proceed with payment of the registration fees through the Electronic System for Payments to SEC.

After payment, the applicant will be able to download the authenticated system-generated documents and digital certificate of incorporation. This holds the same validity as the traditional physical certificate, which means that the SEC will no longer issue a hard copy of the certificate.

To read/download SEC Press Release: “SEC shifts to fully online company registration process with zero notarization, zero hard copy submission”, kindly follow this link: <https://www.sec.gov.ph/pr-2025/sec-shifts-to-fully-online-company-registration-process-with-zero-notarization-hard-copy-submission/>.

### ***SEC, ERC urge energy firms to tap capital market for growth***

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) deepened their commitment to support the growth and expansion of power generation and distribution companies by simplifying the process of raising capital through the capital market.

The SEC and ERC on March 27 formally launched the Securing and Expanding Capital for PowerGen Operators and Wholesale Electricity and Retail Services (SEC POWERS) in an event

titled “POWER ON: Harnessing the Power of the Capital Market for a More Sustainable Energy Sector.”

Issued in 2024 through SEC Memorandum Circular No. 4, Series of 2024, SEC POWERS aims to streamline the registration of securities for power generation and distribution utilities. This supports the requirement for power generation and distribution firms to offer and sell at least 15% of their shares to the public, as mandated by Section 43(t) of Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

“Energy projects are very capital intensive. This is where the capital market can come in. We aim to introduce the limitless potential of tapping the capital market as a financing solution to meet the growing demand of the energy sector,” SEC Chairperson Emilio B. Aquino said in his welcome remarks.

“With the issuance of SEC POWERS, we aspire to usher in more substantial investments in power projects by streamlining the securities registration process. With a simplified registration statement, we make it easier for power generators and distribution utilities to offer their shares to the public,” he added.

Under the program, the SEC Markets and Securities Regulation Department (MSRD) is required to complete the review of the registration statement of the covered companies within 45 days from the filing, pursuant to RA No. 8799, or the Securities Regulation Code.

Before filing an application with the MSRD, the registrants are required to secure all the necessary clearances from the SEC Company Registration and Monitoring Department, Corporate Governance and Finance Department, Enforcement and Investor Protection Department, Office of the General Counsel, and Office of the General Accountant to ensure the timely processing of their registration statements.

The simplified process also seeks to support the investments needed to meet the country’s energy requirements, which is estimated to reach P67 trillion, according to the Philippine Energy Plan 2023-2050.

“This is exactly why the synergy between the ERC and SEC matters. By working together, we’re finding solutions that not only meet regulatory requirements but also provide our regulated entities the support they need to grow,” ERC Chairperson and CEO Monalisa C. Dimalanta said in her speech.

“When we combine our expertise and resources, we’re not just making processes more efficient for investors and industry players—we are also strengthening the foundation for a stronger, more competitive energy sector,” she added.

The event also featured discussions from Oliver O. Leonardo, Director of the SEC MSRD; Rochelle V. Moreno, Chief Energy Regulation Officer at the ERC; and Marigel B. Garcia, Vice President and Head of Issuer Regulation Division at the Philippine Stock Exchange, among other speakers, on the salient points and processes of SEC POWERS.

Oliver Tan, President and CEO of Citicore Renewable Energy Corporation, also shared his testimonials as a publicly listed company in the energy sector.

To read/download SEC Press Release: “SEC, ERC urge energy firms to tap capital market for growth”, kindly follow this link: <https://www.sec.gov.ph/pr-2025/sec-erc-urge-energy-firms-to-tap-capital-market-for-growth/>.

***BIR RMO No. 19-2025 - Creation of Alphanumeric Tax Code (ATC) of Selected Revenue Source under Revenue Regulations (RR) No. 007-2025***

BIR issued RMO No. 19-2025 - Creation of Alphanumeric Tax Code (ATC) of Selected Revenue Source under Revenue Regulations (RR) No. 007-2025 to facilitate the proper identification and monitoring of payment for corporate income tax of domestic and resident foreign corporations classified as Registered Business Enterprise (RBEs) under the Enhanced Deductions Regime (EDR) as provided in Section 294(C) of the Tax Code of 1997, as amended by Republic Act (RA) No. 12066 and as implemented by Revenue Regulations (RR) No. 007-2025.

To read/download RMO No. 19-2025, kindly follow this link: <https://bir-cdn.bir.gov.ph/BIR/pdf/RMO%20No.%2019-2025.pdf>.

***BIR RMC No. 37-2025 - Prescribes the streamlined procedures and guidelines on the mandatory requirements for claims of VAT refund under Section 112 of the NIRC of 1997, as Amended (Tax Code), except those pursuant to a writ of execution by the Courts***

This Circular is issued to provide uniform guidelines and prescribe the revised mandatory documentary requirements in the processing and grant of VAT refund claims under Section 112 of the Tax Code, in line with the latest developments on VAT introduced by Republic Act (R.A.) No. 12066.

This Circular shall cover claims for VAT refund under Section 112(A) and (B) of the Tax Code, except those pursuant to a writ of execution by the Courts, that are filed on April 1, 2025 and thereafter.

To read/download RMC No. 37-2025, kindly follow these links: [Full Text](#) | [Annexes](#)

***LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE HEARINGS (Affecting industries)***

***Senate:***

<b>Monday, April 28</b>		
<b>Committee/Sub-Committee</b>	<b>Time &amp; Venue</b>	<b>Agenda</b>

Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change (Subcommittee on P.S. Res. No. 1310) (Presiding: Sen. Escudero)	9:00 A.M. Sen. C.M. Recto Room 2/F Right Wing, Senate	P.S. Res. No. 1310 – Philippine Mining Act (Exploration Permits and Mineral Agreements) (By: Sen. Escudero)
<b>Wednesday, April 30</b>		
<b>Committee/Sub-Committee</b>	<b>Time &amp; Venue</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
Basic Education (Presiding: Sen. Gatchalian)	10:00 A.M. Sen. J.P. Laurel Room 2/F Right Wing, Senate	Initial Results of the 2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)
Blue Ribbon (Subcommittee on Motu proprio in relation to P.S. Res. Nos. 1319 and 1322) (Presiding: Sen. A. Cayetano)	1:00 P.M. Sen. V.Y. Sotto Room 2/F Right Wing, Senate	Motu proprio in relation to P.S. Res. Nos. 1319 and 1322 on the sudden collapse of the Cabagan-Sta. Maria Bridge in the Province of Isabela, less than a month after it was completed and opened to the public, leaving six persons injured, and to look into the processes and protocols of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) – from planning, to bidding, to construction, to inspection and to the testing of public infrastructure projects – in order to ensure public safety; and how the DPWH deals with errant and abusive contractors (By: Sens. Pimentel and A. Cayetano)

*Prepared by the FPI Secretariat*

***“That in all things God may be glorified”***