



TAMBULI Weekly Newsletter

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1. Have a Merry #TatakPinoy Christmas, give and receive the very best from the Philippines



The DTI-Tatak Pinoy Strategy Office is tasked with advancing the Tatak Pinoy Strategy of [RA No. 11981](#)—the country's first national industrial policy institutionalized through law, designed to drive innovation and competitiveness in domestic industries. - <https://www.facebook.com/DTI.BMDPO/posts/-experience-the-magic-of-christmas-at-the-dti-bagong-pilipinas-tatak-pinoy-chris/1303903148446536/>.

2. Position Paper of the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) on HB 4884 - AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT 8800, ALSO KNOWN AS THE SAFEGUARD MEASURES ACT, TO MAKE THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY RESILIENT TO THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

I. Introduction

The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), representing domestic manufacturing and industrial enterprises nationwide, submits this position paper to articulate priority reforms necessary to protect Philippine industry, employment, and productive capacity amid persistent smuggling, unfair trade practices, regulatory fragmentation, and rising global trade risks.

This position paper is submitted in support of House Bill No. 4884 as an important step toward strengthening the Philippines' safeguard regime under Republic Act No. 8800. FPI emphasizes, however, that safeguard measures will only be effective if reinforced by strong anti-smuggling enforcement, faster trade remedies, disciplined tariff policy, and institutionalized trade defense coordination.

II. Enact a Comprehensive Anti-Smuggling Law (Modeled After the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Framework)

Smuggling--both physical and technical--remains one of the most damaging threats to Philippine manufacturing, undermining legitimate enterprises, eroding government revenues, and endangering public safety.

FPI strongly recommends that the proposed Comprehensive Anti-Smuggling Law be patterned after the anti-agricultural smuggling framework, treating large-scale and syndicated smuggling of industrial and manufactured goods as economic sabotage, with strong inter-agency coordination and expedited prosecution.

Address Technical Smuggling and Product Standards

FPI further emphasizes the urgent need to curb technical smuggling. Imported products should be subject to the same mandatory testing, certification, and compliance requirements imposed on local manufacturers before they are sold to the public. Addressing both physical and technical smuggling is the single most immediate and cost-effective industrial policy intervention available to the government.

III. Strengthen Trade Remedy Mechanisms

Trade remedies are legitimate, WTO-consistent instruments to address unfair trade practices. However, Philippine industries often suffer irreversible injury before relief is granted.

FPI supports reforms that enable:

- **Faster investigations and determinations** for safeguard, anti-dumping, and countervailing duty cases;
- Greater use of **provisional measures** where prima facie injury exists;
- Improved access to customs and trade data to support timely filings;
- Stronger coordination among the Tariff Commission, DTI, and the Bureau of Customs for effective enforcement
- Trade remedies must function as **real-time relief mechanisms**, not merely post-injury documentation exercises.

IV. Adopt a Balanced and Strategic Tariff Policy

FPI emphasizes that tariff policy must balance consumer welfare with industrial sustainability and national resilience.

Accordingly, FPI calls for:

- **Institutionalized and periodic tariff reviews;**
- **Pre-liberalization impact assessments** for sensitive and strategic sectors;
- Clear adjustment and transition mechanisms for affected industries;
- Avoidance of sudden, unilateral tariff cuts that expose domestic producers to import surges without safeguards.

Tariff policy should be treated as a **strategic economic instrument**, not merely a revenue or short-term price-control tool.

V. Institutionalize a Trade and Industry Defense System

FPI strongly supports the establishment of a permanent **Trade and Industry Defense System** that enables early detection, rapid response, and coordinated action against trade-related threats.

Such a system should include:

- Continuous monitoring of import volumes, prices, and market shares;
- Early-warning alerts for import surges, dumping, or circumvention;
- Rapid inter-agency coordination;
- Formal industry participation in surveillance and consultation mechanisms.

This system will allow government to act **preventively rather than reactively**, protecting jobs, investments, and domestic supply chains.

VI. Conclusion

A resilient Philippine economy requires more than openness --it requires **fairness, enforcement, and institutional capacity**. Addressing smuggling, technical regulatory evasion, weak trade defenses, and un-strategic liberalization will do more to strengthen Philippine industry than ad hoc or reactive measures.

The Federation of Philippine Industries stands ready to work with Congress and the Executive to advance these reforms and to build a robust Trade and Industry Defense Framework that supports inclusive growth, industrialization, and long-term competitiveness.

3. Battling illicit trade: My 40-year journey against smuggling - By: FPI CE, Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza

I have been at the forefront of the relentless battle against smuggling and other forms of illicit trade for over 40 years. In my capacity as FPI chairman for decades, I have engaged persistently in this battle. Illicit trade causes significant harm to the Philippine economy in numerous ways—it undermines government revenues, deters investment, stifles innovation, and disrupts fair competition. Studies estimate that the Philippines faces an annual influx of

approximately P2.3 trillion from both outright and technical smuggling. These activities not only lead to revenue losses of around P250 billion for the government, but they also restrict its ability to fund essential public services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development.

I have taken on this fight against smuggling without expecting any financial gain or recognition. Moreover, I have the right to

voice my concerns when government officials fail to fulfill their duties.

Over the years, only two Philippine Presidents recognized my efforts: Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and President Ferdinand Bongbong Marcos Jr. Both leaders understand the detrimental impact that smuggling and illicit trade can have on our economy, which is why they each launched their own anti-smuggling campaigns.

President Arroyo established the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG) to protect national interests and promote economic stability. Smuggling and illegal importation have long threatened the Philippine economy, undermining legitimate businesses and depriving the government of vital revenue. By creating an organization with the authority to apprehend, investigate, and prosecute these crimes, the Arroyo administration reaffirmed its dedication to upholding the law and advancing economic reforms.

This collaborative approach, which includes various government agencies and the

private sector with me as a representative, enhances operational efficiency and ensures a strong response to smuggling activities. During former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's term, I felt honored when she recognized and commended my long-standing efforts in anti-smuggling initiatives in front of business leaders and cabinet officials.

Following his acknowledgment of the serious smuggling issue and his pledge to pursue legal action against smugglers in his State-of-the-Nation Address, President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. enacted the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act (Republic Act No. 12022). This legislation aims to strengthen efforts against smuggling, hoarding, and cartel activities within the agricultural sector. It designates these actions as economic sabotage, classifying them as non-bailable offenses with penalties of life imprisonment and fines that can reach up to five times the value of the smuggled goods. (Continue reading:

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/12/17/battling-illicit-trade-my-40-year-journey-against-smuggling/>)

4. Turning threat into opportunity for agriculture - By: Ernesto M. Ordoñez

Farmers, fisherfolk and agriculture stakeholders must turn today's threat of continued corruption into an opportunity. Two events in the last few days indicate that this is the right time.

The recent anticorruption demonstrations have created a climate where significant change is now possible. Last Dec. 9, President Marcos went beyond addressing symptoms to tackling the root of corruption.

Punishing the corrupt is not enough. The root is the system that allows this corruption. If this is not addressed, the symptoms will persist.

The president identified four bills for prioritization to tackle this problem.

- The Anti-Political Dynasty Bill will put an end to the control of our government by entrenched dynasties.

- The Party List System Reform Act will stop the farce of this being misrepresented by

unscrupulous politicians.

- The Independent People's Commission Act will allow objective findings and corrective action without undue interference from powerful vested interests.

- The Citizens Access and Disclosure of Expenditures for National Accountability will enable the transparency and preventive action necessary to stop the massive misuse of our government resources.

DA takes action

Last Dec. 8, the Department of Agriculture (DA) created a watchdog with authority to take corrective action as it monitors the implementation of farm-to-market roads and other agriculture-related infrastructure projects.

It will operate under a Social and Environmental Safeguards unit that will institutionalize safeguard measures.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said, "A nationwide network of trained safeguards officers will provide oversight at both central and regional levels."

We had participated in the limited monitoring of farm-to-market roads as an elected private sector committee chair of the Philippine Council of Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF).

However, our documented reports of

anomalies were not acted upon by the Department of Public Works and Highways, which had the authority to take action.

Since Tiu Laurel will harness PCAF officers at the national and local levels as part of the watchdog body with authority, we can now see positive results. (To read/view the full article follow this link: <https://business.inquirer.net/564086/turning-threat-into-opportunity-for-agriculture>)

5. Thanks to everyone who made it a success



<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/17ZN4Tp29E/?mibextid=wwXlfr> |
<https://www.facebook.com/people/Federation-of-Philippine-Industries/61578157306463/>

6. FPI Board in action





Photos taken during the FPI Board meeting held on Thursday, December 11, 2025, 11:00am to 3:00pm at the Pavillion & Cabana, Club Filipino, Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan City.

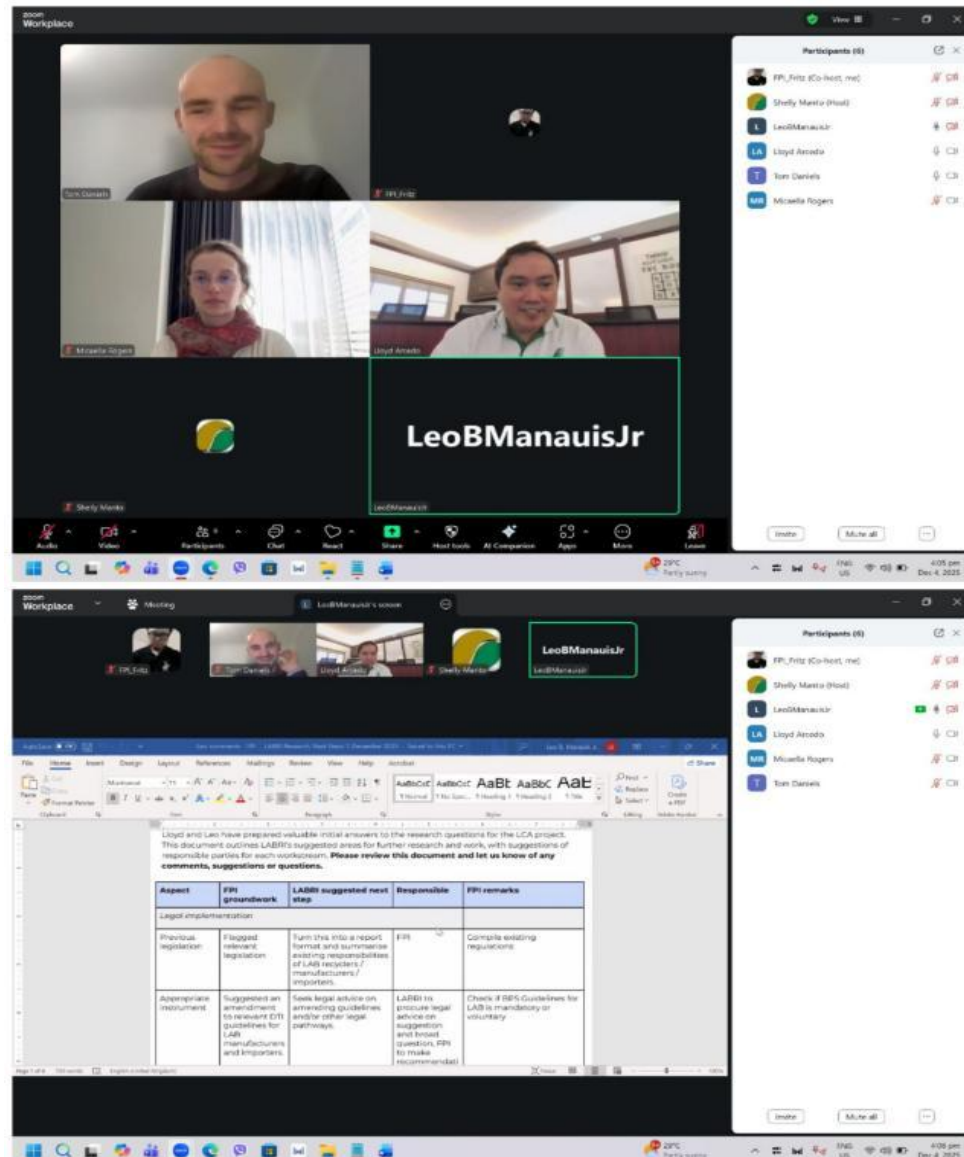
7. FPI Committees

Legislation and Policy



Photo taken during the FPI Legislation and Policy Committee meeting that was held on Thursday, December 11, 2025, 9:00am at the Pavillion & Cabana, Club Filipino, Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan City.

Environment



FPI Environment Committee-Sub Working Group (SWG) Meeting, Thursday, 04 December 2025, 4:00PM via Zoom. Participants reaffirmed that the project's goal is to develop an administrative policy requiring manufacturers and importers of lead-acid batteries to recover the batteries they sell through a Lifecycle Accountability (LCA) framework—an EPR-type system. The preferred outcome is a Joint Administrative Order (JAO) between DTI (as lead) and DENR, focusing on formalizing collection and ensuring recycling through accredited facilities.

8. FPI in the news

Battling illicit trade: My 40-year journey against smuggling |

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/12/17/battling-illicit-trade-my-40-year-journey-against-smuggling/>

Turning threat into opportunity for agriculture |

<https://business.inquirer.net/564086/turning-threat-into-opportunity-for-agriculture>

John Reinier H. Dizon, president and board member of the Federation of Philippine Industries, Inc., talks about Gross Domestic Product growth, infrastructure, and the other factors shaping cement demand in the Philippines. |

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3WmFkPm22s>

FPI joins the call! The Federation of Philippine Industries stands with business and civic groups pushing for an independent anti-corruption body to restore public trust | <https://bilyonaryo.com/2025/12/10/business-and-socio-civic-groups-warn-of-crisis-of-public-trust-demand-independent-anti-corruption-body-with-enforcement-powers/business/>

Business and socio-civic groups warn of 'crisis of public trust', demand independent anti-corruption body with enforcement powers | <https://bilyonaryo.com/2025/12/10/business-and-socio-civic-groups-warn-of-crisis-of-public-trust-demand-independent-anti-corruption-body-with-enforcement-powers/business/>

PH finance department backs extension of estate tax amnesty to 2028 | ANC | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyvQZTLXmKA>

20 business groups press Marcos to certify anti-corruption bills 'urgent' | <https://mb.com.ph/2025/12/10/20-business-groups-press-marcos-to-certify-anti-corruption-bills-urgent>

Business groups push fully empowered anti-corruption body | <https://insiderph.com/business-groups-push-fully-empowered-anti-corruption-body>

Joint Statement Business Groups Urge the Creation of a Fully-Empowered Anti-Corruption Body | <https://mbc.com.ph/2025/12/10/joint-statement-business-groups-urge-the-creation-of-a-fully-empowered-anti-corruption-body/>

Education reforms urged by biz group | <https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/12/10/business/top-business/education-reforms-urged-by-biz-group/2239974/amp>

FPI's Lee: Education must align with industrialization to catch up with Asia | <https://bilyonaryo.com/2025/12/09/fpis-lee-education-must-align-with-industrialization-to-catch-up-with-asia/business/>

Education reform, Tatak Pinoy singled out for potential to arrest PHL slide within region | <https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/12/09/717547/education-reform-tatak-pinoy-singled-out-for-potential-to-arrest-phl-slide-within-region/>

PH risks falling behind Asian peers without reforms | <https://manilastandard.net/business/314678429/ph-risks-falling-behind-asian-peers-without-reforms.html>

FPI: PHL may miss the boat in region's industrial boom | <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/12/09/fpi-phl-may-miss-the-boat-in-regions-industrial-boom/>

FPI chair Lee: Filipino resilience shines amid crisis | <https://bnc.bilyonaryo.com/fpi-chair-lee-filipino-resilience-shines-amid-crisis/business/>

Add action to anger for agriculture | <https://business.inquirer.net/562330/add-action-to-anger-for-agriculture>

FPI: Reforms, transparency crucial to revive manufacturing sector | <https://bnc.bilyonaryo.com/fpi-reforms-transparency-crucial-to-revive-manufacturing-sector/business/>

"Lee: In the face of storms, the Filipino spirit stands strong" | <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BhkuG24pS/>

9. Other news & announcements



Maharlika plans P8-billion investment in Asian Terminals stake |

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/12/17/719112/maharlika-plans-p8-billion-investment-in-asian-terminals-stake/>

Philippines edges up to 54th in public integrity index |

https://www.bworldonline.com/infographics/2025/12/17/719377/philippines-edges-up-to-54th-in-public-integrity-index/#google_vignette

Listed U/KBs' Shares: Yearly Gains and Losses as of end-September 2025 |

<https://www.bworldonline.com/infographics/2025/12/15/718497/listed-u-kbs-shares-yearly-gains-and-losses-as-of-end-september-2025/>

A risk-conscious pause for monetary policy? |

https://www.bworldonline.com/opinion/2025/12/12/718194/a-risk-conscious-pause-for-monetary-policy/#google_vignette

House panel approves bill on single, unified minimum wage |

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2153396/house-panel-approves-bill-on-single-unified-minimum-wage>

House panel OKs bill establishing uniform wage for NCR, provincial workers |

<https://tribune.net.ph/2025/12/10/house-panel-oks-bill-establishing-uniform-wage-for-ncr-provincial-workers>

How does the Philippines' sectoral debt as a share of GDP compare with other emerging markets in East and Southeast Asia in Q3 2025? |

<https://www.bworldonline.com/infographics/2025/12/10/717570/how-does-the-philippines-sectoral-debt-as-a-share-of-gdp-compare-with-other-emerging-markets-in-east-and-southeast-asia-in-q3-2025/>

The Institute of International Finance (IIF) said Philippine government debt as a share of the economy was 57.8% in the third quarter | <https://zurl.co/h5oRr>

How to protect small family businesses from BIR abuse? New Commissioner asked | ANC | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Y5xZSbm5EU>

ICT crosses P600 as Ricky Razon's flagship hits P1.2 trillion market cap |
<https://bilyonaryo.com/2025/12/09/ict-crosses-p600-as-ricky-razons-flagship-hits-p1-2-trillion-market-cap/business/>

Former BIR Chief Lumagui: 132 officers formally charged over corrupt practices | ANC | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7U-t7hRGJhM>

BIR expects single-use plastics tax to raise revenue of up to P10B per year |
https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/12/08/717233/bir-expects-single-use-plastics-tax-to-raise-revenue-of-up-to-p10b-per-year/#google_vignette

BusinessWorld TOP STORIES | <https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/>

BOC Highlights Customs Modernization Gains as ARISE Plus Philippines Concludes | <https://customs.gov.ph/boc-highlights-customs-modernization-gains-as-arise-plus-philippines-concludes/>

BOC AOCG Memo 251-2025 - Mandatory Use of Body-Worn Cameras During the Conduct of Condemnation Activities | <https://customs.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-251AOCG-MEMO.pdf>

BOC CMC 266-2025 - Master List of Certified Export-Oriented Enterprises, Including Disapproved Applications as of 30 October 2025 in Accordance with Republic Act No. 12066, Otherwise Known as the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy Act | <https://customs.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025CMC-266-2025.pdf>

20TH CONGRESS COMMITTEE HEARINGS/MEETINGS

- [Senate of the Philippines Committee Hearings/Meetings](#)
- [House of Representatives Committee Meetings](#)