

Key Economic Takeaways from the President's Fifth State of the Nation Address

The Chamber welcomes the President's emphasis on strengthening governance, economic competitiveness, energy security, and resilience. Several key announcements have direct implications for the business community and provide important signals on the direction of the country's economic agenda.

On governance and anti-corruption, the administration's continued pursuit of accountability, particularly in relation to the flood control investigation, sends an important message on the *importance of transparency and responsible use of public funds*. The reported recovery, freezing, or preservation of approximately ₱25 billion, with savings redirected toward education, food security, and healthcare, highlights the potential impact of stronger governance on national development priorities. For the private sector, greater transparency and accountability in government processes are essential in building investor confidence and ensuring a more predictable business environment.

On energy security and power reliability, the Chamber welcomes the administration's focus on expanding the country's energy capacity and improving long-term energy stability. The tracking of nearly 10,000 MW from 200 power projects through 2028, the development of over 1,700 MW of energy storage capacity, the extension of the Malampaya gas project, and the push for renewable energy, hydrogen development, and possible nuclear power expansion demonstrate the government's recognition that reliable and affordable power is fundamental to economic growth. *For Cebu and the Visayas, ensuring sufficient and competitively priced electricity remains critical to sustaining manufacturing, tourism, information technology, and other key industries.*

The proposed "Sariling Kuryente" Act, which aims to encourage household solar and battery storage adoption, also presents opportunities to strengthen energy resilience and support wider participation in the country's transition toward a more diversified energy system.

On economic support and business competitiveness, the Chamber appreciates the administration's efforts *to provide tax relief for the middle class and ease compliance pressures on businesses, including the BIR one-time tax abatement initiative for micro-entrepreneurs*. These measures can help improve cash flow, encourage formalization, and allow enterprises to focus resources on expansion and job creation.

The continued push for trade expansion, including the country's existing and upcoming free trade agreements, provides opportunities for Philippine businesses to access more markets and integrate further into regional and global supply chains. The facilitation of more than ₱6 trillion in investments through the Green Lanes initiative is also a positive signal of the government's commitment to improving investment facilitation and reducing barriers to doing business.

On infrastructure, resilience, and sustainability, the Chamber recognizes the importance of reforms aimed at accelerating project implementation, including improvements to right-of-way processes. Faster infrastructure delivery will be essential in improving connectivity, reducing logistics costs, and supporting economic corridors such as those being developed in Cebu.

The proposed updates to the National Building Code, the strengthening of disaster resilience through initiatives such as Ligtas Pinoy evacuation centres, and reforms to solid waste management: including the promotion of waste-to-energy solutions are important steps toward building safer, more sustainable, and more resilient communities.

On technology, artificial intelligence, and industry development, the Chamber welcomes the administration's focus on preparing the workforce for emerging industries. The training of 1.8 million Filipinos for AI readiness reflects the growing importance of digital skills in maintaining competitiveness. While the Pax Silica Industrial Hub is anchored in the Luzon Economic Corridor, the broader direction toward advanced manufacturing, innovation, and technology-driven industries presents opportunities for regions such as Cebu to strengthen their own digital and industrial capabilities.



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For Cebu and the Visayas, these national priorities align closely with the region's development goals, particularly in strengthening the Metro Cebu Economic Hub, advancing the West Cebu Economic Corridor, protecting the Central Cebu Conservation Corridor, expanding the North and South Cebu Tourism Corridor, and developing the North and South Cebu Agri-Industrial Corridor.

The Chamber looks forward to continued collaboration with government in ensuring that these policy directions translate into meaningful outcomes for businesses and communities. Effective implementation, regulatory consistency, and sustained public-private partnership will remain critical in transforming these commitments into inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Padayon Cebu!