

Miyagi Prefectural Assembly News

The 338th Miyagi Prefectural Assembly (September 2012 Regular Meeting)

1. Overview

1. Session:

11th September (Tues.) – 11th October (Thurs.) 2012: 31 days

2. Resolutions:

Resolution concerning the construction of tidal embankments while respecting local residents' wishes

3. Bills Submitted by the Governor:

- i. The 2012 Miyagi Prefecture General Accounting Supplementary Budget, etc. (7 items)
- ii. Approval for settlement of the 2011 Miyagi Prefecture General and Special Accounts (1 item)
- iii. Approval for settlement of the Public Enterprise Account (1 item)
- iv. Disposal of remaining earned surplus funds in the Miyagi Prefecture Bulk Water Supply Account (1 item)
- v. Ordinance Amending One Section of the Miyagi Prefectural Tax Ordinance, etc. (9 items)
- vi. Changes to the city limits, etc. (12 items)
- vii. Conclusion of construction contracts, etc. (22 items)
- viii. Approval for appointment of members to the Board of Education (2 items)

4. Assembly Question Time:

2 assembly members posed questions representing their parties and 16 assembly members posed general questions about a variety of topics including the marine produce industry special zone for reconstruction being promoted by the prefectural government and the issue of bullying in schools.

5. Bills Submitted by Assembly Members:

Proposal Regarding Continuance and Expansion of Government Subsidy System for Private Educational Institutions

Proposal Seeking Enhancement of Measures to Deal with Multiple/Heavy Debts

Proposal Seeking Promotion of Concrete Measures Based on the Forest and Forestry Regeneration Plan

Proposal Regarding Relief/Help for Hepatitis B and C Patients

Proposal Regarding the Prompt Enhancement of Regulations Concerning Law-Evading Drugs and Herbs

Proposal Seeking Expansion of Small/Medium Enterprise Growth Support Measures

Proposal Regarding Reconstruction of Housing in Disaster Areas

Proposal Seeking Revision of Taiwanese Nationals' Nationality Notation

Proposal Concerning the Intrusion into Territorial Waters by a Chinese Patrol Boat and the Unlawful

Disembarkation on the Senkaku Islands by Private Groups

Proposal Seeking a Rethink of Diplomatic Policy Towards South Korea in Protest Against President Lee Myung-bak

6. Petitions:

3 items

7. Results:

Resolutions	1 item passed
Bills submitted by the governor	55 items passed, approved and ratified
Bills submitted by assembly members	10 items passed
Petitions	3 items adopted

2. Main Details of the Assembly Question Time

1. Marine Produce Industry Special Recovery Zones

Enquiry: Regarding conflict with and prefectural plans concerning the Miyagi Prefecture Fisheries Cooperative, which opposes the introduction of special zone for reconstruction

Response: We plan to continue explanations to gain the understanding of the Miyagi Prefecture Fisheries Cooperative. We suggested special zone for reconstruction as one possible choice to enable the continuance of the fisheries industry in the midst of the aging society problem. With the introduction of special zone for reconstruction, we hope to achieve education for industry successors and the revitalisation of fisheries and the whole region through realising continuous and effective fisheries management.

The Marine Produce Industry Special Zone for Reconstruction

A system whereby fishing rights (exclusive permission to perform designated fishing activities in a specific area during a fixed period of time), which in accordance with the Fisheries Act have heretofore been granted with priority to local fishing cooperatives will also be extended to private businesses. Proposed by Yoshihiro Murai, Governor of Miyagi Prefecture, in May 2011 in order to support the recovery of the disaster-devastated marine produce industry.

2. The Miyagi Development Tax

Enquiry: Regarding the plan to amend the ordinance which would extend the Miyagi Development Tax by 5 years

Response: There were many forward-thinking opinions regarding the extension of the taxed period at the explanatory meetings held at various organisations. I think we were able to gain the understanding of the economic community regarding the possible results that can be achieved through the utilisation of the Development Tax. It is essential that we continue to proactively promote industry recovery and try to minimise the negative effect earthquake disaster measures have on prefectural economic activities and individuals.

The Miyagi Development Tax

Common name for the Corporate Enterprise Tax Overassessment System, which applies to all corporations which establish offices or places of business and conduct business activities within the prefecture. The collected tax revenues are to be utilized for industrial recovery policies such as “The Realisation of Plentiful Prefecture Miyagi.”

3. The 11th March Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster

Enquiry: Regarding the establishment of 11th March as “Miyagi Safety Day”

Response: Setting 11th March as a special day would be effective in passing on the memory of the disaster to the next generation and ensuring it is not forgotten. It would also become an opportunity to promote prefectural residents efforts towards recovery outside the prefecture. We will consider how to move forward with this.

4. Miyagi Prefecture’s Administrative Areas

Enquiry: Regarding the current state of the 7 administrative areas within the prefecture and their affiliated regional organisations

Response: We would like to consider the relations among the municipalities within and outside the administrative areas during disasters such as earthquakes, then examine this issue further once we have reached a certain stage in our reconstruction and recovery efforts.

5. Harmful Rumours Caused by the Nuclear Incident

Enquiry: Regarding the fact that compensation for damage caused by harmful rumors about agricultural, forestry, and fisheries products in Miyagi Prefecture is not incorporated in the national interim compensation guidelines

Response: We will press the national government to change the interim compensation guidelines so that producers’ and businesspersons’ losses can be promptly recovered. We will disseminate information about prefectural agricultural, forestry and fisheries produce and its safety to the rest of Japan and work towards dispelling harmful rumours that damage the region’s image, as well as ensure that the earthquake disaster is not forgotten.

6. Measures Against Bullying in Schools

Enquiry: Regarding prefectural measures towards the eradication of bullying

Response: It is necessary for the prefectural government to deal with the problem of bullying with a firm stance, working closely with the police. We will make suitable efforts to deal with the bullying problem at all prefectural schools.

3. Standing Committees

- i. General Affairs and Policy Planning Committee
Bills were reviewed and voted on including the Ordinance Amending a Part of the Miyagi Prefectural Tax Ordinance
- ii. Environment, Lifestyle and Agricultural, Forestry and Fisheries Industry Committee
Bills were reviewed and voted on including the Ordinance Amending a Part of the Food Product Hygiene Act Enforcement Ordinance
- iii. Health and Welfare Committee
Bills were reviewed and voted on including the Ordinance Amending a Part of the Temporary Special Provision Fund Ordinance for the Better Treatment of Nursing Employees
- iv. Commerce, Industry and Tourism Committee
Petitions were reviewed and voted on including the Petition Regarding the Appropriate Use of Support Funds for Dental Clinics in Disaster-Stricken Areas
- v. Construction Enterprise Committee
Bills were reviewed and voted on including the Prefectural Road Route Revision Ordinance
- vi. Education and Public Safety Committee
Bills were reviewed and voted on including the Ordinance Amending a Part of the Organised Crime Exclusion Ordinance

4. Miscellaneous

1. Special Budget Committee
General questions were posed by the 10 committee members, after which reviews were carried out in section meetings, then the 2012 General Accounting Supplementary Budget was decided.
2. Account Settlement Special Committee
On the last day of general questions at the plenary session, the Account Settlement Special Committee was established and the settlement of the 2011 general account as well as each special committee's budget etc. were reviewed, authorised and passed.