

The 357th Miyagi Prefectural Assembly (September 2016 Regular Session)

1) Session: September 14, 2016 (Wed.) to October 14, 2016 (Fri.), 31 days

2) Outline

The 357th Miyagi Prefectural Assembly (September 2016 regular session) was held over a period of 31 days from September 14 to October 14, 2016. 58 bills were approved, including a bill to allocate an additional 18.233 billion JPY to the general account supplementary budget to account for bills including those related to efforts to promote tourism in disaster-affected coastal municipalities through cooperation with the popular mobile game Pokemon Go and the acquisition of land for the Wide-Area Disaster Management Base Establishment Project.

Discussions were actively carried out during the representative and general inquiries regarding the securing of housing in disaster-affected areas and disaster prevention measures for rivers and waterways based on flood damage from the torrential rains of September 2015.

3) Bills Voted On

1. Resolutions (total): 1

- Resolution to denounce North Korea's 5th nuclear weapons test

2. Proposals (total): 6

- Proposal regarding the advancement and enhancement of assistance for private schools
- Proposal for the continuation and strengthening of designated raw milk producers' organizations
- Proposal for the revitalization and enhancement of local public finances

3. Bills Submitted by the Governor (total): 51

- FY 2016 Miyagi Prefecture General Account Supplementary Budget
- Bill to amend part of Miyagi Prefecture's prefectural tax ordinance, etc.

4. Petitions (total): 4

- Petition to quickly solve issues of overcrowding in special education schools (approved)
- Petition to implement overcrowding countermeasures in prefectural special education schools (approved)
- Petition to submit a proposal regarding assistance for private schools to the national government and Diet (approved)
- Petition to carry out health examinations for children in regard to radiation exposure (not approved)

4) Main Content of Representative and General Inquiries Asked during the Assembly

1. Planned Site of Wide-Area Disaster Management Base

The base will properly serve its purpose during a time of disaster due to measures such as the earthquake-resistant construction of facilities equipped to withstand foreseeable levels of shaking and the securing of roads to be used for emergency transport.

Reviews of data from ground boring in the immediate vicinity of the planned site revealed a sandy gravel layer and low levels of groundwater, leading to the determination of a minimal danger of liquefaction.

2. Tourism Promotion Projects Utilizing Pokemon Go

In the coastal areas of the prefecture, which suffered extensive tsunami damage, tourist numbers are still approximately 70 percent of pre-disaster levels. In response, the prefecture elected to partner with Pokemon Go as a way to expose more people to the current state of disaster-affected areas. The prefecture will coordinate with municipalities to ensure proper consideration of traffic safety and public etiquette.

3. Improvement of Residential Environment for Disaster Victims

Preparation of land for approximately 80 percent of the planned 9,700 households capable of rebuilding on their own is scheduled for completion by the end of FY 2016. For those not capable of rebuilding on their own, construction of 14,000 units of disaster public housing, or 90 percent of the planned total, is scheduled for completion in the same period.

The prefecture is working toward full provision of residential rebuilding land by FY 2020, and completion of all disaster public housing units by FY 2018.

4. Disaster-Resistant River and Waterway Development Plan

Approximately 70 percent of restoration work on rivers and waterways damaged by torrential rain is scheduled to be completed during the current fiscal year.

The prefecture will continue to combat recurring damage in frequently affected waterways and improve non-structural measures to simplify evacuation for the peace of mind of residents.

5. Addition of a Second “Doctor-Heli” Medical Services Helicopter

The prefecture will examine the necessity of a second medical services helicopter based on a thorough review of the usage history of the current medical services helicopter and its use in conjunction with the prefecture’s disaster management helicopter(s) and the medical services helicopters of neighboring prefectures.

5) Activities of the Prefectural Assembly in Relation to Restoration and Reconstruction Efforts

The Earthquake Disaster Recovery Special Committee visited the Reconstruction Agency on September 12, submitting a formal request and holding an opinion exchange with Reconstruction Minister Imamura.