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SENATE

S. B. No. **2265**

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Introduced by Senate President FRANKLIN M. DRILON

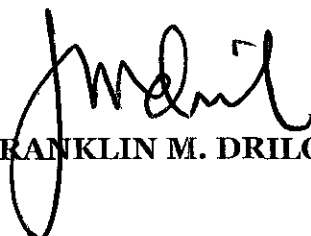
**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE
ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

In 2013, one of the strongest typhoons ever recorded ripped through the Visayas. The ferocity of typhoon Yolanda left a trail of devastation of epic proportion, from which residents of the region are still staggering to recover. Considering the scale of devastation brought by the series of typhoons hitting the nation in recent years, we cannot escape the reality that the natural disasters we now face are evolving, with terrifying intensity and frequency.

We have long been aware of our vulnerability to typhoons and monsoons, recognizing that our country lies within the Pacific Ring of Fire. Our exposure to such natural calamities and disasters has led to the establishment of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), which is tasked with real-time collection of high-quality meteorological data and the timely issuance of accurate weather forecasts and warnings. However, as revealed by the magnitude and extent of the damage brought about by typhoon Yolanda, PAGASA's current methods have proven inadequate and ineffective against this new wave of fiercer natural disasters. It is therefore high time to take bolder steps towards the modernization of PAGASA to effectively manage weather and geological related risks, minimize the vulnerability of people and investments, and boost the resilience of institutions and communities.

This bill addresses the urgent need to equip PAGASA with state-of-art facilities and cutting-edge analytical methodologies, fully utilizing the technological advances available globally. Moreover, this bill seeks to raise the research and development capability, adopting a rationalized and integrated approach with focus on improvement of operations for specialized services and cost recovery. Also, this bill aims to augment the financial rewards of working in PAGASA, in order to boost the productivity of current personnel and likewise attract newcomers to join the agency.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


FRANKLIN M. DRILON

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SENATE

S. B. No. 2265

RECEIVED BY: *je*

Introduced by Senator FRANKLIN M. DRILON

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE
ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Title** – This Act shall be known as the “*PAGASA Modernization*
2 *Act*”.

3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy** – It is hereby declared to be the policy of
5 the State to utilize scientific knowledge and information as an instrument to ensure
6 the safety, well-being and economic security of the people; to promote national
7 progress and to contribute to regional socioeconomic development through various
8 applications of meteorology, geophysics and space sciences. Towards this end, the
9 State shall undertake the modernization of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical
10 and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) to elevate its technological and
11 operational capacity to effectively and efficiently perform its mandate.

12

13 **SEC. 3. Mandate of the PAGASA.** The PAGASA shall provide adequate,
14 up to date data, and timely information on atmospheric, astronomical and other
15 weather related phenomena using the advances achieved in the realm of science to
16 help the government and the people prepare for calamities caused by typhoons,
17 floods, landslides, storm surges, extreme climatic events, and climate change, among
18 others, to afford greater protection to the people and ensure their safety, well-being
19 and economic security towards the promotion of national progress.

20

1 **SEC. 4. Objectives** – Pursuant to the foregoing policy, the modernization of
2 the PAGASA shall be implemented in accordance with the following objectives:

- 3
- 4 a) To upgrade physical resources and operational techniques through
5 acquisition of state-of-the-art instruments, equipment and facilities to
6 enhance current capabilities in providing timely, accurate and reliable
7 weather, flood, climate monitoring, forecasting, and warning services for
8 the general public and information for agriculture, transportation and
9 other industries across the country;
- 10 b) To raise the research and development capability and promote human
11 resources development, adopting a rationalized and integrated approach
12 with focus on improvement of operations for specialized services and cost
13 recovery;
- 14 c) To develop mechanisms for integrating disaster management and
15 socioeconomic urban and rural development planning and water resource
16 management at the national and local levels in cooperation with
17 appropriate government agencies;
- 18 d) To establish and enhance regional weather service centers in strategic
19 areas in the country to broaden the Agency's bases for delivery of service to
20 the countryside;
- 21 e) To cultivate greater awareness by the public of weather systems, the
22 progress of weather and climate change hazards like typhoons, floods and
23 other related information through educational projects and programs;
- 24 f) To develop a technology-based and financially self-sufficient data center
25 that will serve as the central information station for real time weather
26 related updates available to every individual;
- 27 g) To enable the Agency to formulate the Philippines' typhoon preparedness
28 plan; and
- 29 h) To determine a better and more competitive base pay and other benefits
30 for its personnel to promote professionalism and to foster commitment to
31 the service.

32 **SEC. 5. PAGASA Modernization Program** – The Secretary of the
33 Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Administrator of PAGASA,
34 in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management

1 (DBM) and the Director-General of the National Economic and Development
2 Authority (NEDA), shall be responsible for the formulation of the the PAGASA
3 Modernization Program based on the policy objectives provided in this Act.
4

5 Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the
6 DOST shall submit to the President the PAGASA Modernization Program for
7 approval.
8

9 **SEC. 6. *Human Resource Development*** – The three (3)-year program
10 for the modernization of the PAGASA shall provide a human resource development
11 training component that shall include undergraduate and postgraduate degree
12 training subcomponents and shall be upgraded to keep pace with rapid international
13 scientific and technological advances and increasing demands of weather services.
14

15 A scholarship program for undergraduate and graduate degrees in
16 Meteorology shall be implemented in coordination with the DOST, Commission on
17 Higher Education (CHED) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) not later than
18 three (3) years from the enactment of this Act.
19

20 **SEC. 7. *Salary and other Benefits*** – The DOST in coordination with the
21 DBM shall develop a new salary scale consistent with Republic Act No. 8439 (Magna
22 Carta for Scientists, Engineers, Researchers and other Science and Technology
23 Personnel in Government) with a corresponding increase in the base pay, allowances,
24 and other benefits of the agency subject to the approval of the President.
25

26 **SEC. 8. *Period of Implementation*** – The modernization program under
27 this Act shall be implemented for a period of three (3) years: *Provided, That*
28 payments for amortization of outstanding multi-year contract obligations incurred
29 under the program may extend beyond this period. The PAGASA shall continue to
30 modernize and constantly update its operational capabilities to keep pace with global
31 best practices.
32

33 **SEC. 9. *Office of the PAGASA Administrator***– The PAGASA shall be
34 headed by an Administrator who shall be appointed by the President upon

1 recommendation by the Secretary of the DOST. The Administrator shall be assisted
2 by three (3) Deputy Administrators for Research and Development, Operations and
3 Services, and Administration & Engineering Services.

4
5 **SEC. 10. Progress Report** – The Administrator of the PAGASA shall
6 prepare an annual report on the status of the implementation of the Modernization
7 Program. The annual report shall be submitted, through the Secretary of the DOST,
8 to the President and to the Senate and the House of Representatives.

9
10 **SEC. 11. Appropriations** – The amount necessary to carry out the
11 implementation of this Act shall be initially charged against the current fiscal year
12 appropriations of the Department of Science and Technology–Philippine
13 Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST–
14 PAGASA). Thereafter, the amount needed for the continued implementation of the
15 modernization program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

16
17 The amount may be augmented by grants, bequests, contributions and
18 donations whether from local or foreign sources: *Provided*, That acceptance of
19 grants, bequests, contributions and donations from foreign governments shall be
20 subject to the approval of the President upon the recommendation of the Secretaries
21 of the DOST and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

22
23 **SEC. 12. Cost Recovery Measures** – The PAGASA, with the approval of
24 the Secretary of the DOST, shall implement a sustainable cost recovery program that
25 will allow it to earn revenue from its issuance of specialized weather information,
26 certifications, and scientific and technical publications for which the necessary fees
27 can be charged: *Provided*, That fees collected shall be deposited as income of the
28 General Fund; *Provided further*, That no fees shall be charged on the issuance of
29 regular and special reports to the general public on the weather insofar as it affects
30 national safety and the economy.

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32 **SEC. 13. Separability Clause** – If any provision or part of this Act is
33 declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected
34 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

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SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, orders, proclamation, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved