

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

'18 MAR -8 A11 :43

SENATE
S. No. 1735

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

AN ACT
REORGANIZING AND STRENGTHENING THE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE PHILIPPINES, ESTABLISHING FOR THE
PURPOSE THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT, EMPOWERING THE REGIONAL FIELD OFFICES,
ESTABLISHING COORDINATING MECHANISMS, STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

Some events are so tragic and catastrophic that they are permanently imprinted on a nation's collective memory. In the case of Japan, it was the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombings. In the case of the United States, it was the Pearl Harbor bombing and the September 11 attacks. In the case of the Philippines, it was Typhoon Yolanda (internationally known as Haiyan).

No typhoon in Philippine history has been as traumatically remembered as Yolanda. Above and beyond the data- 5,500 dead, 1.14 million houses destroyed and Php 24 billion worth of damaged infrastructure and agriculture- the imagery of 275 km/hour winds and huge waves of water wiping out communities will remain a national tragedy told and retold to generations hereafter.

We are witnesses not only to Yolanda, but also to a world of escalating risks and vulnerability. We have a responsibility not only to deliver justice not only to those whose lives were needlessly lost to the waves and winds of Yolanda, but also to prevent the same from happening to future generations. We have an inter-generational duty to leave a world where the next generations will be more prosperous and more resilient than before.

Our first step in fulfilling our duty is to strengthen our disaster risk reduction and management institutions. Currently, this is embodied by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC). The NDRRMC was created through Republic Act No. 10121, otherwise known the "*Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010*". It was a response to Typhoon Ondoy which ravaged 4.9 million families, and led to the declaration of a state of calamity in 23 provinces and Metro Manila, and caused an outbreak of *leptospirosis*. However, Typhoon Yolanda was clearly several orders of magnitude above Ondoy. Therefore, our institutions must adjust and be be strengthened to be able to meet the "new normal" set by Yolanda.

This measure intends to open the policy discussion on reforming our DRRM institutions. It proposes to create a Department of Disaster Resilience and Emergency Management which shall be in charge of all disaster risk reduction and management programs, policies and activities in the country.

The Department shall consist of two separate and distinct entities: the National Disaster and Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Department Proper. The NDRRMC shall retain its policy-making and coordinating functions under R.A. 10121. However, the Department proper shall be the Secretariat and executive arm, converting the NDRRMC's plans into specific operational guidelines and programs. The Department will be led by its own Secretary and shall be empowered by three

bureaus- the Bureau of Disaster Resilience and the Bureau of Disaster Preparation and Response, and the Bureau of Knowledge Management and Dissemination.

It is envisioned that the Department proper will provide leadership with accountability. In the parlance of public management, the Department proper will "steer" the various stakeholders towards a disaster-resilient Philippines. The Secretary of the Department will wear two "hats" as he shall be the Chairperson of the NDRRMC and the Head of the Department Proper.

There shall also be created a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Research and Training Center which will serve as a repository of all knowledge and research and development, and as a capacity building entity on disaster risk reduction and management. This measure also envisions the creation of a National Emergency Response Corps, which shall be a dedicated, trained and reliable team who can be deployed on short notice in the event of a disaster composed of full-time and part-time disaster managers, paramedics, debris clearing personnel, volunteers, and aid and relief managers.

This measure further proposes to empower the regional offices of the Department proper. The regional offices shall have the same administrative structure as the Department proper. They will have two bureaus on resilience and disaster preparedness and response. They will also have a regional research and training center and a regional emergency response corps. In normal times, they will provide technical assistance and capacity building to LGUs. In times of disaster, the regional offices will serve as an "operations center" for the coordination of disaster preparation and response.

These are but a few innovations which this measure seeks to introduce towards the improvement of our national disaster risk reduction and management system. speedy approval of this measure is eagerly sought.¹


GRACE POE

¹ We would like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance and inputs given to us by Vice Admiral Alexandar Pama, Mr. James Roman and Mr. Hector Brizuela in drafting this measure.



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

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

1 Section. 1. *Short Title.*- This Act shall be known as the "*Philippine Disaster Risk*
2 *Reduction and Management System Act of 2018*"

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*- The State recognizes the country's severe
4 vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters and their catastrophic impact on the
5 people's constitutional rights to life, liberty and property, particularly of the poor and
6 the marginalized. The State further recognizes the need to institutionalize the principles
7 of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management, and the
8 imperative to embody these principles in responsive and capable institutions. As such, it
9 is hereby declared a policy of the State to:

- 1 a) Address the root causes of vulnerabilities to disasters by strengthening the
2 country's institutional capacity for disaster risk reduction and management
3 and building the resilience of local communities to disasters including climate
4 change impacts;
- 5 b) Adopt a disaster risk reduction and management approach that is holistic,
6 comprehensive, integrated, and proactive in lessening the socioeconomic and
7 environmental impacts of disasters including climate change, and promote
8 the involvement and participation of all sectors and all stakeholders
9 concerned, at all levels, especially the local community;
- 10 c) Promote a whole-of-government and whole-of society approach to the
11 development of disaster risk reduction and management, to ensure the buy-in
12 of all concerned stakeholders, whether from the government sector, private
13 sector, or non-government sector;
- 14 d) Adhere to and adopt the universal norms, principles and standards of
15 humanitarian assistance and the global effort on risk reduction as concrete
16 expression of the country's commitment to overcome human sufferings due
17 to recurring disasters;
- 18 e) Develop, promote, and implement a comprehensive National Disaster Risk
19 Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) that aims to strengthen the
20 capacity of the national government and the local government units (LGUs),
21 together with partner stakeholders to build the disaster resilience of
22 communities, and to institutionalize arrangements and measures for reducing
23 disaster risks, including projected climate risks, and enhancing disaster
24 preparedness and response capabilities at all levels;
- 25 f) Incorporate internationally accepted principles of disaster risk management in
26 the creation and implementation of national, regional and local sustainable
27 development and poverty reduction strategies, policies, plans and budgets;
- 28 g) Adopt and implement a coherent, comprehensive, integrated, efficient and
29 responsive disaster risk reduction program incorporated in the development
30 plan at various levels of government adhering to the principles of good

1 governance such as transparency and accountability within the context of
2 poverty alleviation and environmental protection;

3 h) Mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change in development
4 processes such as policy formulation, socioeconomic development planning,
5 budgeting, and governance, particularly in the areas of environment,
6 agriculture, water, energy, health, education, poverty reduction, land-use and
7 urban planning, and public infrastructure and housing, among others;

8 i) Institutionalize the policies, structures, coordination mechanisms and
9 programs with continuing budget appropriation on disaster risk reduction
10 from national down to local levels towards building a disaster-resilient nation
11 and communities;

12 j) Streamline existing disaster risk reduction and management institutions,
13 structures and mechanisms, in order to reduce redundancy, increase synergy
14 and efficiency, and provide decisive and accountable leadership in times of
15 crisis;

16 k) Ensure that disaster risk reduction and climate change measures are gender
17 responsive, sensitive to indigenous know ledge systems, and respectful of
18 human rights;

19 l) Develop and strengthen the capacities of vulnerable and marginalized groups
20 to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of
21 disasters;

22 m) Incorporate community and people's participation on a greater level, to
23 ensure that all national disaster risk reduction programs, activities and
24 policies are aligned with and responsive to the needs of the people;

25 n) Recognize the local risk patterns across the country and strengthen the
26 capacity of LGUs for disaster risk reduction and management through
27 decentralized powers, responsibilities, and resources at the regional and local
28 levels;

- 1 o) Recognize and strengthen the capacities of LGUs and communities in
2 mitigating and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the impact
3 of disasters;
- 4 p) Engage the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs), the private
5 sector and volunteers in the government's disaster risk reduction programs
6 towards complementation of resources and effective delivery of services to
7 the Citizenry;
- 8 q) Provide maximum care, assistance and services to individuals and families
9 affected by disaster, implement emergency rehabilitation projects to lessen
10 the impact of disaster, and facilitate resumption of normal social and
11 economic activities; *and*
- 12 r) Ensure that affected communities rise stronger than they were before
13 incidents of disasters, towards reducing their vulnerability and preventing the
14 repetition of the catastrophic loss of human life and livelihood and destruction
15 of property.

16
17 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.*- The following terms are defined for the purposes of
18 this Act:

- 19
20 a.) "*Build Back Better*" is an approach to disaster recovery and reconstruction
21 which not only rebuilds communities to pre-disaster standards but also
22 increases their resilience to future disasters;
- 23 b.) "*LERC*" refers to the Local Emergency Response Corps created under this Act;
- 24 c.) "*Department*" refers to the Department of Disaster Resilience and Emergency
25 Management which encompasses the National Disaster Risk Reduction and
26 Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Department proper;
- 27 d.) "*Department proper*" refers to the offices, agencies, bureaus, and services
28 under the authority of the Secretary of the Department of Disaster Resilience
29 and Emergency Management;

- 1 e.) "Secretary" refers to the Secretary of the Department Resilience and
2 Emergency Management;
- 3 f.) "NERC" refers to the National Emergency Response Corps created under this
4 Act.
- 5 g.) "NDRRMC" refers to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
6 Council created under R.A. No. 10121, otherwise known as the "*Philippine*
7 *Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010*";
- 8 h.) "RERC" refers to the Regional Emergency Response Corps created under this
9 Act;
- 10 i.) "RFO" refers to the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
11 Councils created under R.A. No. 10121 and renamed as "Regional Field
12 Offices" under this Act.
- 13

14 Unless expressly defined in this Section, the other technical terms and concepts
15 used in this Act shall be read as defined under Section 3 of Republic Act No. 10121,
16 otherwise known as the "*Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of*
17 *2010*".

18

19 **ARTICLE II**

20 **THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCY**

21 **MANAGEMENT**

22

23 *Sec. 4. The Department of Disaster Resilience and Emergency Management.* - To
24 carry out the objectives of this Act and those of R.A. No. 10121, the Department of
25 Disaster Resilience and Emergency Management is hereby established. The Department
26 shall be the primary policy-making, planning, coordinating, integrating, supervising,
27 implementing, monitoring and evaluating authority with regard to disaster risk reduction
28 and management in the country.

29

1 *Sec. 5. Organization of the Department.-* The Department shall consist of two
2 separate and distinct entities: the National Disaster and Risk Reduction and
3 Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Department Proper. The NDRRMC shall be
4 attached for administrative and budgetary purposes to the Department.

5
6 *Sec. 6. Organization of the Department Proper.-* The Department proper shall be
7 comprised of the following:

8
9 a.) The Office of the Secretary, which shall encompass the Office of the
10 Secretary and the Offices of the Undersecretaries and the Assistant
11 Secretaries, and their immediate support staff;

12 b.) The Regional Field Offices;

13 c.) The Bureaus enumerated under Section 17 of this Act;

14 d.) The National Emergency Response Corps (NERC);

15 e.) The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Research and Training
16 Center (NDRRMC-RTC)

17 f.) The attached agencies enumerated under Section 21 of this Act; *and*

18 g.) The Department Services enumerated under Section 18 of this Act;

19
20 *Sec. 7. Selection of Personnel.-* The selection of the personnel of the Department
21 shall be based strictly on merit and fitness in accordance with the Civil Service Code and
22 other applicable laws and rules and regulations. The formulation of the organizational
23 structure and staffing pattern shall be completed within one (1) year after the effectivity
24 of this Act.

25
26 **ARTICLE III**

27 **THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

28
29 *Sec. 8. The National Disaster Risk Reduction Council.-* The NDRRMC shall be the
30 policy-formulating and coordinating body of the Department which shall ensure a