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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 725

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Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE/S TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE FLOODING ALONG THE SAN SIMON AREA OF THE NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY (NLEX) THAT RESULTED IN LONG HOURS OF HEAVY TRAFFIC WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR INCIDENT IN THE FUTURE AND TO DETERMINE WHETHER PROPER DUE DILIGENCE WAS CONDUCTED IN THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE EXPRESSWAY, AS WELL AS ITS SURROUNDING AREAS

1 WHEREAS, the country recently experienced the onslaught of Typhoon Egay
2 (international name: Doksuri) and the enhanced southwest monsoon (Habagat)
3 bringing 27 road sections in the Luzon Island either damaged or closed due to
4 knock-off trees, flooding, and landslides;¹

5 WHEREAS, days after Typhoon Egay left PAR, there are numerous reports
6 from the mainstream and social media about the heavy traffic being experienced by
7 motorists traversing the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) due to floods in its major
8 sections, causing slow-moving traffic of 5 kilometers per hour or an average of
9 around 6 hours to stand-still traffic at the peak of the flooding;²

10 WHEREAS, both northbound and southbound lanes of NLEX near San Simon,
11 Pampanga, particularly under Tulaoc Bridge, suffered heavy traffic that extended up
12 to 6 kilometers as floods reach up to 50 centimeters high;³

¹ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1812549/dpwh-27-luzon-roads-damaged-still-impassable-due-to-typhoon-egay-southwest-monsoon>

² <https://www.manilatimes.net/2023/08/06/news/national/floods-continue-to-stall-nlex-traffic/1904010>

³ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/03/23/motorists-face-heavy-traffic-as-floods-hit-parts-of-nlex>

1 WHEREAS, Metro Pacific Tollway Corp. (MPTC) President and CEO Rogelio
2 "Babes" Singson explained that the flood was caused by water from the nearby
3 Pampanga River flowing into the expressway due to heavy rains brought by the
4 recent typhoon and the southwest monsoon;

5 WHEREAS, MPTC also said that it is already coordinating with the local
6 government of San Simon and the Provincial Government of Pampanga to fix the
7 waterways and drainage system in the area;⁴

8 WHEREAS, NLEX⁵ already placed sandbags, pumped out the water in the
9 road, and plugged water outflows as short-term solutions to drain and block the
10 floodwaters from entering the expressway;⁶

11 WHEREAS, NLEX management is also coordinating with the Department of
12 Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Central Luzon and the Provincial Government
13 of Pampanga to provide a long-term solution to the expressway's flooding problem;⁷

14 WHEREAS, DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan committed to immediately
15 dissolve and dredge the main rivers in the provinces of Bulacan and Pampanga in
16 order to deepen the river beds and improve their clearing capacity during heavy
17 rains;⁸

18 WHEREAS, Pampanga's Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
19 Office (PDRRMC) Chief Angie Blanco said in a statement that it was the first-time
20 that flood waters in San Simon town spilled over NLEX because the silted Pampanga
21 River was not able to handle the combination of high tide and flood water that was
22 aggravated by strong rains;⁹

23 WHEREAS, there is an urgent call for different private and government
24 agencies involved, such as the NLEX Corp., DPWH, and the LGUs, to immediately
25 address this worsening flood problem in NLEX and other surrounding areas, and to
26 provide and implement effective long-term solutions to prevent it from happening
27 again;

⁴ <https://www.spot.ph/newsfeatures/mobility/105828/what-caused-nlex-traffic-metro-pacific-tollways>

⁵ <https://trb.gov.ph/index.php/toll-road-projects/north-luzon-expressway>

⁶ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/03/23/motorists-face-heavy-traffic-as-floods-hit-parts-of-nlex>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Courtesy of Teleradyo Serbisyo, August 04, 2023. DPWH: Shallow Riverbed Caused Flooding in North Luzon Expressway, Dateline Philippines, ANC Digital

⁹ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/05/23/heavy-traffic-in-nlex-caused-by-flooding-exec>

1 WHEREAS, some long-term solutions proposed are the elevation of the
2 pavement of the expressway and the Tulaoc Overpass, clearing of the waterways,
3 and dredging of the Pampanga River, among others;¹⁰

4 WHEREAS, NLEX implemented an increase a toll rate hike of an additional ₱7
5 in the open system and ₱0.36 per kilometer in the closed system;¹¹

6 WHEREAS, NLEX is expected to continue its improvement and expansion
7 projects in the expressway, especially with the increase in the toll fees,¹² which
8 should also include proper road maintenance and effective flood control measures as
9 highlighted during the recent flooding;

10 WHEREAS, DPWH is the national government agency that is tasked to
11 implement and maintain flood mitigation projects along the major river system in the
12 country, such as the Pampanga River;¹³

13 WHEREAS, the Local Government Code mandates LGUs to provide basic
14 services and facilities such as seawalls, dikes, drainage and sewerage, flood control,
15 and other similar facilities within their jurisdiction;¹⁴

16 WHEREAS, flooding has great social and economic consequences such as loss
17 of lives, and damages to properties and infrastructure, health, and livelihood;¹⁵

18 WHEREAS, Pampanga Chamber of Commerce and Industry complains that its
19 members were negatively affected by the NLEX flooding as it entailed additional fuel
20 and manpower costs, as well as spoilage of goods and even penalties from
21 customers, while the unavailability of raw materials affects sales and productivity;¹⁶

22 WHEREAS, a study shows that the disturbances in travel caused by flooding
23 to Filipinos are extensive and have various effects depending on the characteristics
24 of the traveler;¹⁷

¹⁰ ABS CBN News, August 05, 2023. Mga Motorista Umaaaray sa Pagkaipit sa Matinding Trapiko sa NLEX, TV Patrol Weekend.

¹¹ <https://www.rappler.com/business/nlex-implement-higher-toll-rates-june-15-2023/>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/01/02/dpwh-fast-tracks-flood-mitigation-projects-in-pampanga>

¹⁴ <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2007/08/17/13497/lgus-responsible-flood-control-ndash-sc>

¹⁵ https://cswcd.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PJSD-Vol-3-2011_Jago-on.pdf

¹⁶ Courtesy of Teleradyo Serbisyo, August 04, 2023. DPWH: Shallow Riverbed Caused Flooding in North Luzon Expressway, Dateline Philippines, ANC Digital

¹⁷ <https://ncts.upd.edu.ph/tssp/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TSSP2018-06.pdf>

1 WHEREAS, the recent flood and traffic incident in the primary highways in
2 Northern Luzon should not be taken lightly as its impact on the lives of the more
3 than 350,000 daily average motorists traversing through it is immeasurable,¹⁸

4 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of
5 the Philippines, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee/s to conduct an inquiry,
6 in aid of legislation on the recent flooding along the San Simon area of the North
7 Luzon Expressway (NLEX) that resulted in long hours of heavy traffic with the end in
8 view of preventing a similar incident in the future and to determine whether proper
9 due diligence was conducted in the operation and maintenance of the expressway,
10 as well as its surrounding areas.

Adopted,



GRACE POE

¹⁸ <https://mb.com.ph/2023/3/31/mptc-ready-for-holy-week-traffic>