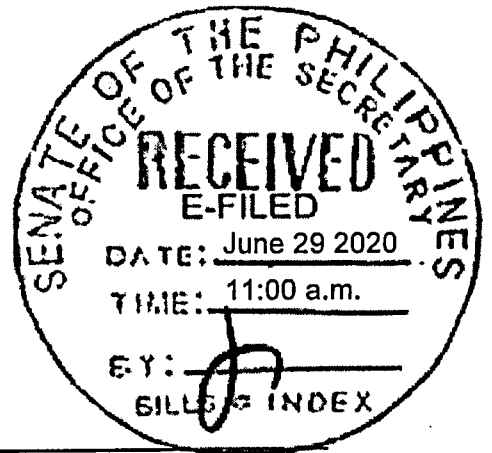


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE
S.B. No. 1642



Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

**AN ACT
INSTITUTING THE POLICIES FOR THE NEW NORMAL ADDRESSING THE
EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 4 of the 1987 Constitution states that, "*The prime duty of the Government is to serve and protect the people.*" The COVID-19 pandemic has taken the country and the whole world aback. The Philippines is one of the high-risk countries affected by the pandemic. On 17 March 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, through Proclamation No. 929, declared a state of calamity in the country due to the sharp increase in the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases.

As of the moment, there are 9.44 million cases worldwide and the Philippines has 32,295 confirmed cases and the numbers are still expected to rise since there is still no vaccine available in the market.

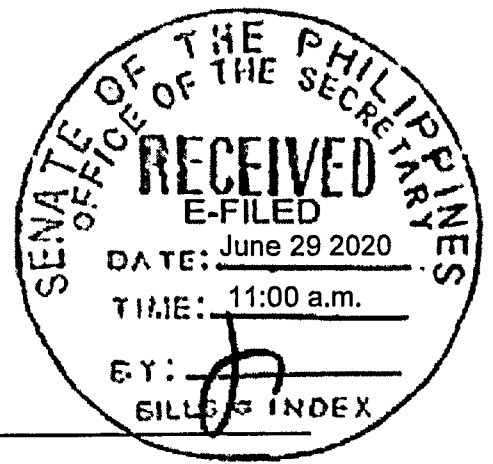
The COVID-19 pandemic is forcing on us a "*new normal*" where people need to practice social distancing and adapt to other behavioral changes in order to prevent the spread of the virus.

The public, with the government taking lead, should prepare to transition towards a "*new normal*" wherein social and economic life can both function through a whole-of-government approach and whole-of-society approach. Thus, this bill seeks to institute policies for the "*new normal*" by providing various programs from health care modernization, to public transportation, to creation of jobs, and promotion of public spaces, among others. This bill not only aims to manage the current situation Filipinos are facing but also aims to improve over-all situation in the long haul. Given the abovementioned circumstances, the urgent passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Imee R. Marcos

IMEE R. MARCOS

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



SENATE
S.B. No. **1642**

Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

AN ACT
INSTITUTING THE POLICIES FOR THE NEW NORMAL ADDRESSING THE
EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*New Normal Act of*
2 *2020.*”

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State has the prime duty to serve and
4 protect the people by instituting policies for the new normal that shall address the
5 effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government shall take the lead in the
6 transition towards a “*new normal*” wherein social and economic life can both
7 function through a whole-of-government approach and whole-of-society approach.

8 Sec. 3. *Health Care Delivery System and Services.* – The Department of
9 Health (DOH), in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local
10 Government (DILG) and Local Government Units (LGUs), shall strengthen and
11 modernize the health care delivery system and services of the country to fight and
12 prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus which shall also adopt a comprehensive,
13 consistent, and systematic approach to current and existing health threats, issues,
14 and concerns to complement the state-of-the-art technology.

15 The Universal Health Care for all Filipinos under Republic Act No. 11223 or
16 otherwise known as the “*Universal Health Care Act*” should be fully implemented and
17 there shall mandatory Pooled Baseline Polymerase Chain Reaction Testing or Pooled
18 Baseline PCR Testing which shall be available, accessible, and affordable to all
19 Filipinos especially to those in the vulnerable sector, as may be determined by DOH.

1 *Sec. 4. Social Protection and Basic Services.* – The Department of Social
2 Welfare and Development (DSWD), in coordination with the DILG and LGUs, shall
3 ensure that social protection and basic services shall be made available and
4 accessible to all Filipinos especially to the hardest hit and poorest sector. The
5 Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), in coordination with the Department of
6 Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall ensure that the
7 Philippine Identification System under Republic Act No. 11055 shall be fast-tracked
8 and fully implemented to facilitate the identification of qualified beneficiaries under
9 the social amelioration program of the government.

10 The Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education
11 (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
12 shall provide educational support and assistance to students especially in adapting to
13 online learning and other programs that build back better school systems.

14 The Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public
15 Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination with the LGUs and the Metro Manila
16 Development Authority (MMDA), shall undertake to improve and reform the public
17 transportation system and major highways and thoroughfares for a more efficient
18 travel and to ease traffic congestion.

19 *Provided that,* the government shall continuously monitor the implementation
20 of the mandatory safety measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus
21 subject to the guidelines, as may be implemented, following the effectivity of this
22 Act.

23 *Sec. 5. Job Provision and Protection.* – The government shall create a
24 program which shall provide for the creation of jobs and assistance to unemployed
25 Filipinos as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Jobs may be offered for skilled,
26 semi-skilled and unskilled workers in government offices, sites, projects, or any
27 government-related undertaking such as infrastructure projects, health programs,
28 creative projects, cleaning and management of the environment and government-
29 owned infrastructure, reforestation, flood control, conservation projects,
30 development of national parks, forests, and historic sites, among others.

31 The public and private sector shall also endeavor to provide, when applicable,
32 work from home arrangements with the use of telecommunication and/or computer

1 technologies, in accordance to Republic Act No. 11166 otherwise known as the
2 "*Telecommuting Act.*" *Provided that*, labor protection and benefits such as social
3 security and/or health insurance shall also be provided to 'gig' work arrangements
4 which shall be based on a pro-rated basis, linking employer-benefit contributions to
5 time worked, jobs completed, or income earned. *Provided further that*, protection to
6 non-payment of "*gig*" work arrangements shall also be made, as may be determined
7 by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

8 For purposes of this Act, "*gig work arrangements*" shall be defined as any
9 temporary position in a free market system for short-term commitments.

10 Sec. 6. *Agri-industry Development.* – The Department of Agriculture (DA)
11 shall promote the development of agriculture, fisheries and food production to
12 ensure the sustainability of food supply, food productivity, availability, accessibility,
13 and affordability despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The DA shall provide nationwide
14 programs that will benefit farmers, fisherfolks, and consumers to increase national
15 agri-fishery output through intensified use of quality seeds, appropriate inputs, and
16 modern technologies to increase levels of productivity across all commodities, both
17 in urban and rural areas.

18 Sec. 7. *New Normal Development Task Force.* – There is hereby created an
19 "*New Normal Development Task Force*" hereinafter referred to as the "*Task Force*"
20 which shall spearhead and ensure that fiscal and financial stimulus programs actually
21 work for the most vulnerable while strengthening multilateral and regional responses
22 that will engender the appropriate adaptation to the new normal. The Task Force
23 shall be composed of the following:

- 24 (a) Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- 25 (b) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA);
- 26 (c) Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH);
- 27 (d) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- 28 (e) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);
- 29 (f) Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
30 (DENR);
- 31 (g) Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr);

- 1 (h) Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development
2 Authority (TESDA);
3 (i) Chairman of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA);
4 (j) President of the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP); and
5 (k) President of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP).

6 The Chairperson of the Council shall be the Secretary of the DILG who shall
7 have the power to require the participation of such other government agencies or
8 instrumentalities in the Council, as he may deem necessary. Provided that, the
9 Council shall, thereafter, formulate a national policy and plan which shall incorporate
10 how the programs, as mentioned in this Act, shall be swiftly implemented and
11 utilized.

12 *Sec. 8. Resilience and Response Programs.* – The government shall formulate
13 and implement response programs that will strengthen Filipino resiliency and
14 adaptation to the new normal, such as:

- 15 (a) Promote social cohesion and investing in community-led resilience and
16 response systems;
17 (b) Provide community support group especially for the repatriated Overseas
18 Filipino Workers (OFWs) and promotion of mental health;
19 (c) Environment protection and sustainability;
20 (d) Digitalization of government public administration and public service
21 functions through E-Government Systems;
22 (e) Access to fast and affordable internet connection;
23 (f) Promote E-commerce and digital payments; and
24 (g) Promote the use of non-motorized vehicle such as bicycles.

25 *Sec. 9. Promotion, Encouragement, and Management of Public Spaces.* – The
26 government shall promote and encourage the use of outdoor public spaces where
27 people can conduct social activities while observing the proper social distancing
28 measures, as may be determined by the DOH.

29 Local government units shall, thereafter, designate public spaces for such
30 purpose and shall be responsible in monitoring privately managed public spaces.

31 For purposes of this bill, the term "*public spaces*" shall mean an accessible
32 outdoor social space, complete with adequate basic facilities, where three (3) or

1 more people gather together to conduct activities for purposes of sports, culture,
2 arts, and other productive activities that are inclusive of all diversity groups.

3 Sec. 10. *Monitoring.* – Local government units, in coordination with the
4 respective departments and agencies, shall be responsible in instituting and
5 monitoring the policies and programs which shall be formulated after the effectivity
6 of this Act.

7 Sec. 11. *Appropriations.* – Upon its effectivity, an initial amount of ten billion
8 pesos (P 10,000,000,000.00) shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
9 Act (GAA) for the implementation of this Act. Thereafter, the appropriation
10 necessary shall be determined by the government, in coordination with the
11 Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

12 Sec. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from
13 the effectivity of this Act, the concerned departments and agencies shall issue the
14 necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act.

15 Sec. 13. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations
16 or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
17 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

18 Sec. 14. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is
19 declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected
20 thereby shall remain in force and effect.

21 Sec. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
22 following the completion of its publication either in the Official Gazette or in a
23 newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

24

25 Approved,