



# LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE QUICK NOTES

*Third Regular Session, 19<sup>th</sup> Congress*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing of the Committee on Public Works joint with the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change**

**Chairperson: Sen. Ramon Bong Revilla Jr.**

**1 August 2024, Thursday, 10:00 a.m., Sen. Recto Room, Senate**

### **Re: I. Flood Control Master Plan and Pending Flood Control Projects**

- P.S. Res. No. 52—Sen. Ramon Bong Revilla Jr.
- P.S. Res. No. 693—Sen. Joel Villanueva
- P.S. Res. No. 717—Sen. Imee R. Marcos

### **II. Privilege Speeches and Manifestations of Senators Joel Villanueva and Loren Legarda on Flooding Situations in Metro Manila and Nearby Provinces**

#### **Background**

- The 1987 Constitution mandates that the State protect and advance the people's right to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.
- In *Oposa vs. Factoran*, the Supreme Court emphasized that under the Administrative Code of 1987, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is responsible for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining infrastructure facilities, including national highways, flood control, water resources development systems, and other public works aligned with national development objectives.
- The Supreme Court noted that in Metro Manila, the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is authorized by RA 7924 to perform metro-wide services related to flood control and sewerage management, including formulating and implementing policies, standards, programs, and projects for an integrated flood control, drainage, and sewerage system.
- The DPWH has reported the completion of 13,224 flood control structures nationwide in the last six years. MMDA claimed that pumping stations in the National Capital Region (NCR) are ready and 100% ready for the coming rainy season;
- Despite the government's flood control master plan and the annual budget allocated to the DPWH and MMDA, flooding and its adverse effects continue

to pose significant challenges to many communities nationwide, particularly during the rainy season.

- During the August 1, 2023 session, Senator Legarda delivered a privilege speech, stating that the persistent rainfall and water discharge from the province's three dams caused Bulacan flooding. She emphasized that dam owners and operators must update their respective protocols to prevent flooding in downstream communities' residential areas, schools, and commercial zones. Senator Villanueva manifested the failure of DPWH's flood control projects, causing the continued flooding in Bulacan Province and neighboring areas.

### **Highlights of the August 9, 2023 Hearing**

- The hearing on August 9, 2023 focused on inspecting existing flood control projects and addressing reports of substandard structures and condemned facilities.
- Senator Villanueva called for examining the effectiveness of the country's existing flood control programs. The goal was to identify current policy and protocol gaps and find solutions to persistent flooding problems. He emphasized the importance of evaluating these programs thoroughly to ensure they can address the issues and implement necessary improvements for better flood management.
- In response to the significant flooding caused by *Typhoons Egay and Falcon* in Ilocos Norte and Cagayan Provinces, Senator Marcos has called for a thorough review of DPWH's budget. She has emphasized the need to ensure that the department's expenditures are effectively allocated to support comprehensive flood control measures.
- Senator Tulfo hoped the hearing would shed light on the reasons behind the country's persistent flooding issues. He urged the Senate to investigate potential corruption within the Philippine Reclamation Authority and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, particularly in the processing of permits for land reclamation projects such as those in Manila Bay.
- DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan presented the major projects currently being undertaken throughout the country and affirmed that the government's flood control projects are still on track. In addition, MMDA Acting Chairman, Atty. Romando Artes, stated that pumping stations are being constructed to alleviate flooding. He emphasized that removing these pumping stations would result in the submersion of Metro Manila.

### **Possible Points for Discussion**

- The need to pass legislations to implement a national land use policy;

- Evaluation of the budget allocated for flood mitigation to determine whether it has been spent effectively, efficiently, and adequately;
- An in-depth examination of the Philippine Development Plan, which focuses on prioritizing highly vulnerable, low-income local government units accessing national programs and funds dedicated to disaster risk reduction, among others;
- The need to review the flood control system and flood control interventions, specifically in the areas that are prone to flooding due to rising sea levels amid climate change and global warming; and
- The necessity to study the impact of the ongoing and existing reclamation projects and silted rivers.