

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 6092

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Taal Volcano erupted last January 12, 2020 and until the present, there are still threats and reports of another imminent eruption.

As a result, nearby areas where ash has persisted, families were evacuated and properties were destroyed.

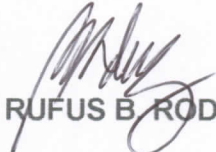
The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported that the Taal Volcano eruption has affected 50,599 families or 203,763 Filipinos. Many of these families are currently in evacuation centers and still cannot go back to their homes because of the lockdown ordered by the Department of Interior and Local Government.

It has also caused power interruptions in 20 cities and municipalities. Delivery of other basic services by the government is also affected. The NDRRMC also reported that the eruption affected thousands of hectares of agricultural lands and fishing areas, resulting in damage worth over 3 billion pesos.

The effects of the eruption do not end there as there is still the problem of rehabilitation, repair and recovery.

This proposed bill seeks to allocate a supplemental budget of fifty billion pesos to be used to provide immediate relief to affected individuals and families; establish resettlement centers for displaced families; provide livelihood and employment opportunities for local residents; construct, repair, rehabilitate infrastructure in the affected communities; and to adopt and implement other interventions that could expedite the return to normalcy in affected localities.

In view of the foregoing immediate approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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AN ACT

APPROPRIATING THE AMOUNT OF FIFTY BILLION PESOS FOR THE AID, RELIEF, RESETTLEMENT, REHABILITATION, LIVELIHOOD, AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to extend assistance to individuals, families and communities in difficult circumstances brought about by catastrophic meteorological, hydrological, and geological events. Towards this end, the State shall provide programs and services to individuals and communities affected by the Taal Volcano Eruption in 2020 and its aftermath to ensure that the lives of individuals and communities in affected provinces, cities and municipalities may return to normal at the earliest possible time.

SEC 2. Objectives. — This Act is intended to: provide assistance to victims, and individuals and communities affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano and its aftermath through the provision of funds for the immediate relief; establish resettlement centers, particularly for those living within the volcano's permanent danger zone; provision of livelihood and employment opportunities; construct/reconstruct, repair, and/or rehabilitate of public infrastructure; and adopt and implement other interventions to expedite the return to normalcy in affected areas.

SEC 3. Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund. — The amount of Fifty Billion Pesos (Php 50,000.000,000) is hereby appropriated as the Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Taal Fund, to carry out the purposes of this Act.

Donations and grants from foreign and domestic sources made for the purpose of providing aid, relief and rehabilitation services in areas affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano shall form part of the Taal Fund.

The amount may be augmented by appropriations from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund as provided in Republic Act No. 11260 and Republic Act No. 11465, otherwise known as the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020, respectively. In the subsequent years, Congress may increase the amount allocated to the Taal Fund through a supplemental budget or through the annual general appropriations.

SEC 4. Guidelines in Allocation and Utilization of the Taal Fund. — The following guidelines shall be observed in the utilization of the Taal Fund:

(a) The Taal Fund can be used to augment aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood programs and projects implemented by government agencies concerned for the victims of the Taal Volcano eruption and its aftermath in the affected communities: Provided That, any program or project charged against the Taal Fund shall only be complementary and supplementary to and shall not be a replacement of any existing program, project or

activity on disaster relief, risk reduction and management already implemented by the government agencies concerned, including local government units;

(b) The Taal Fund shall be used for infrastructure projects, including but not limited to the construction, repair, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of resettlement centers, homes and townsites, roads and bridges, flood control, drainage, water and irrigation systems, communication systems and power lines, hospitals, school buildings, government offices, tourism facilities, public markets, and other similar infrastructure and facilities;

(c) Aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood services shall be equitably extended to all victims of the Taal Volcano eruption and its aftermath, irrespective of political affiliation, sex, creed, religious belief, or ethnic origin;

(d) Labor-intensive technology shall be used in the identification, selection and implementation of programs and projects; and

(e) No money from the Taal Fund shall be released without prior identification of programs and projects to be funded, nor shall it be used to settle obligations incurred before the approval of this Act.

SEC 5. Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Commission. — The Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Taal Commission, is hereby created to carry out interventions necessary for the realization of the purposes of this Act.

The Taal Commission shall be organized within thirty (30) days after the approval of this Act. It shall have a term of six (6) years from its organization: Provided, That the President may, through the issuance of a proclamation within six (6) months prior to the expiration of the term, extend the term once for not more than a period of three (3) years.

For the purpose of coordination and administration, the Taal Commission shall be attached to the Office of the President.

SEC 6. Powers and Functions of the Taal Commission. — To carry out its objectives under this Act, the Taal Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) To prescribe the overall strategic framework in the utilization of the Taal Fund as provided in Section 3 of this Act;

(b) To formulate policies and plans for the implementation of aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, livelihood, and development programs and services to communities adversely affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano and its aftermath in harmony with the plans and policies of other agencies and instrumentalities of the National Government;

(c) To make a determination of the areas to be prioritized to mitigate potential damage to lives, habitation, infrastructure, agricultural and other resources;

(d) To identify, prioritize and coordinate the implementation of the various programs and projects to be funded in accordance with Section 4 of this Act;

(e) To sue and be sued in its name: and to adopt, alter and use a seal;

(f) To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every class, kind and description which are necessary to the realization of its purposes with any individual, firm or corporation, organization or association, private or public, subject to the usual budgeting, accounting and auditing requirements: Provided, That approval of contracts or agreements with foreign government entities shall require prior consultation with and approval of the President;

(g) To apply for, receive and accept grants and donation of funds, equipment, materials and services needed for the development of the affected localities from domestic and foreign sources;

(h) To monitor the progress of the relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, livelihood, and development efforts of the government in relation to the eruption of Taal Volcano and its aftermath;

(i) To coordinate and consult with national government agencies, local government units and non-government organizations concerned in the prioritization of programs and projects;

- (j) To call upon any department, office, instrumentality, agency, or any political subdivision of the government for assistance, including the detail or secondment of essential personnel, as may be necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the Taal Commission; and
- (k) To perform such other powers as may be necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC 7. Composition of the Taal Commission. — The Taal Commission shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) Secretary of Agriculture as ex-officio member;
- (b) Secretary of Budget and Management as ex-officio member;
- (c) Secretary Labor and Employment as ex-officio member;
- (d) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development as ex-officio member;
- (e) Secretary of Public Works and Highways as ex-officio member;
- (f) Governor of the Province of Batangas as ex-officio member;
- (g) Governor of the Province of Cavite as ex-officio member;
- (h) Executive Director of NDRRMC as ex-officio member; and
- (i) Two (2) members from non-government and civil society organizations engaged in disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts to be appointed by the President;

The President shall designate from among the ex-officio members of the Taal Commission the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson thereof.

The President shall appoint an Executive Director of the Taal Commission.

The Members and the Executive Director of the Taal Commission shall serve a term of six (6) years unless sooner terminated for cause or further extended pursuant to Section 5 of this Act.

SEC 8. Powers and Responsibilities of the Executive Director. — The Executive Director of the Taal Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) To execute and administer the policies and decisions of the Taal Commission;
- (b) To manage the day-to-day operation of the Taal Commission;
- (c) To directly coordinate the activities of all agencies and instrumentalities of the government in the planning and implementation of projects in affected communities;
- (d) To monitor the programs and projects and evaluate the effects of execution by these agencies and instrumentalities;
- (e) To submit to the Taal Commission periodic reports relating to the development of the affected communities; and
- (f) To perform such other powers as may be necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC 9. Implementation of Programs and Projects. — The agencies of government involved with the aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood services as well as infrastructure support shall be the implementing agencies of the Taal Commission in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations.

The survey, construction, repair, rehabilitation or reconstruction of public infrastructure and facilities, and the provision of aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood services to individual beneficiaries may be undertaken by the implementing government agencies concerned in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

The Taal Commission may also seek the assistance or engage the services of private sector entities, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and other volunteer organizations in the implementation of priority programs and projects as provided in Section 2 of this Act and in accordance with existing rules and regulations.

SEC 10. Partnership with Private Sector Entities, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, and Other Volunteer Organizations. — To tap the resources and expertise of the private sector, the Taal Commission is hereby authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with private sector entities in the implementation of relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, and livelihood programs and projects in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations.

The Taal Commission, in the implementation of relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood programs and projects, may also seek the assistance of or enter into agreements with non-government, civil society and other volunteer organizations: Provided, That these organizations have proven track records in the provision of relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood services in the country.

SEC 11. Preference for Locally-Available Manpower. — Residents in the affected communities, particularly the victims of Taal Volcano eruption, shall be given preference in hiring or employment in the construction, repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction projects as may be identified by the Taal Commission.

SEC 11. Report to Congress. — The Taal Commission shall submit to Congress a detailed quarterly report on the implementation of this Act, which includes, but is not limited to the following information:

(a) Revenues that accrue to the Taal Fund, including the list of local and foreign donors and the nature of their donation:

(b) Aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, and livelihood services funded through the Taal Fund including the amounts released, obligated and disbursed for such services; the list of names of approved individual beneficiaries; the implementing agency, private contractor, or partner organization that has undertaken the project: and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the system used to deliver such services: and

(c) Construction, repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction projects financed or being financed by the Taal Fund, including the amounts released, obligated and disbursed for such projects, the mode of procurement for such projects; the roster of contractors; and the accomplishments for the expended appropriations, including the percentage of completion.

SEC 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations — The President shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within thirty (30) days upon the approval of this Act.

SEC 13. Separability Clause. — If any provision, section or part of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, invalidate or impair any other provisions, sections or parts hereof.

SEC 14. Repealing Clause. — All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, issuances, and rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to and inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC 15. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved,