

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5646



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos


EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines as an archipelago is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world¹. With the earthquakes in Central Visayas, the supertyphoon Yolanda, and the recent surge of earthquakes in Northern Mindanao, it is evident that we as a nation should always be fully-prepared given the frequency and intensity of the forces of nature that hit the country, year in and year out. To complement the efforts of the government to minimize the socio-economic and environmental impacts of natural disasters, the State should equip its citizens with the necessary knowledge and skills on how to deal with typhoons, earthquakes, and the like.

Through constitutional fiat, the State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation building, and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall also encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs. In line with these circumstances, this measure seeks to implement an emergency and disaster response program in the curriculum for our Senior High School Program.

A well-trained citizenry would aid minimize the damage and casualties that natural disasters bring. The knowledge and skills from such an emergency and disaster response program may spell the difference for a lot of our fellow probinsyanos, especially those in highly-vulnerable areas.

It is for these purposes that the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS
Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party List

¹ <http://nine.cnnphilippines.com/news/2015/11/25/philippines-fourth-most-disaster-prone-country.html>

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AN ACT

MANDATING THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EMERGENCY AND DISASTER
RESPONSE TRAINING IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Laging Handa Act”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

To this end, the State shall ensure that each student that goes through its basic education curriculum shall be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to respond to emergencies and crises of varying nature.

SECTION 3. *Coverage.* – The program mandated under this Act shall apply to all students from Grade 11 to Grade 12 in all high schools in public and private institutions.

SECTION 4. *Emergency and Disaster Response Program.* – There is hereby established a mandatory emergency and disaster response program for students enrolled in Grade 11, and to be completed in Grade 12. Said program shall form part of

the basic curricula for basic education in public and private educational institutions in pursuance to the provisions of this Act.

Any student who fails to undergo this program in accordance with this Act shall not be qualified for graduation. Any educational institute that fails to institute and implement the Emergency and Disaster response program in pursuance of this Act shall be subject to disciplinary and administrative sanctions as the Department of Education (DepEd) may impose.

SECTION 5. *Program of Instruction.* – The Emergency and Disaster Response Program shall have the following program of instruction:

- a) For Grade 11, there shall be mandatory course units on basic medical procedures and first aid. This aspect of the Program shall have instruction both in the theoretical and practical aspects of first aid. There shall also be theoretical instruction on practical zoology and botany, and principles in emergency and disaster response. The appropriate skills examination shall be administered to gauge the student's proficiency with such.
- b) For Grade 12, the course units required shall entail practical survival and emergency response skills. This basic survival and emergency response training aims to organize and train citizens in disaster preparedness and enable them to assist in evacuation and rescue operations.
- c) For both aspects of the Program, there shall be civic training for students in order for them to be active participants and volunteers for the development and improvement of health, education, ecology, and environmental protection, disaster reduction and management, and human and civil rights awareness.

SECTION 6. *Persons Exempted from this Act.* – The following persons are exempted from the coverage of this Act:

- a) Students who are physically or psychologically unfit, as certified by authorized medical personnel;
- b) Students who may be exempted from training for valid reasons which may be authorized jointly by DepEd and the academic institutions where the concerned student is enrolled;

SECTION 7. *Funding.* – The funds for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the Emergency and Disaster Response Program shall be provided for in the general appropriations act of the Department of Education.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of National Defense, DepEd, in consultation with other relevant government agencies and private stakeholders, such as but not limited to the Philippine Red Cross, as the Secretary of Education may determine, shall design and formulate the Program of Instruction on the Emergency and Disaster Response Program within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act. They shall also jointly issue the implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementations of the provisions of this Act within thirty (30) days from the approval of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, and proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act, are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,