

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez*

House Bill No. 6612

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) first emerged in Wuhan, Hubei, China, in December 2019. On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a pandemic. As of 11 March 2020, over 126,000 cases have been confirmed in more than 110 countries and territories, with major outbreaks in mainland China, Italy, South Korea, and Iran. More than 4,600 have died from the disease and 67,000 have recovered.

In the Philippines, the first case of COVID-19, confirmed on January 30, 2020, was a 38-year old woman who arrived from Wuhan. Two days later, the Philippines recorded the first death outside China. As of March 11, 2020, there are already 49 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with hundreds of possible cases where people are being investigated or are under quarantine.


Aside from the health implications, COVID-19 has also affected business and jobs.

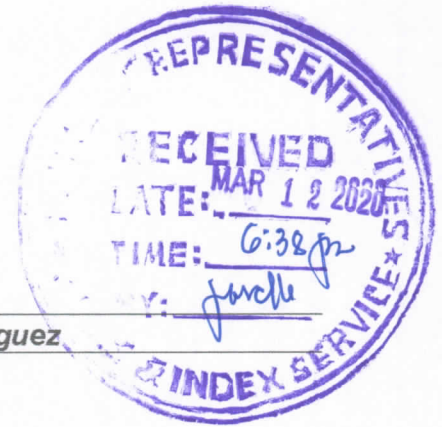
Philippine Airlines (PAL) has laid off 300 workers as part of a business restructuring plan to manage losses sustained from travel restrictions to coronavirus-stricken destinations. At least another 300 workers lost their jobs since February as a result of COVID-19 affecting the tourism sector. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has also stated that 66 firms either temporarily closed down or implemented flexible arrangements for workers, mostly in Central Luzon and three other regions known for tourism sites. Further, said 47 companies and/or factories with 4,416 workers had implemented flexible work arrangements, including shorter hours, reduced working days or carrying out forced leaves.

Establishments including hotels, restaurants and resorts have been greatly affected especially in tourist areas. As an example, data released by the Malay Tourism Office of Malay town, Aklan province, where Boracay is located, showed that there was a 40-percent drop in tourist arrivals for February 2020 alone with only 103,834 foreign and domestic tourists. In comparison, there were 172,695 tourists for February 2019.

The biggest drop is the foreign tourist arrivals, which accounted for more than 51 percent. For February 2020, there were only 40,436 foreign tourists. In comparison, there were 115,143 foreign tourists for February 2019.

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

  
RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ



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AN ACT

APPROPRIATING THE AMOUNT OF TEN BILLION PESOS TO FUND AN EMERGENCY  
TOURISM STIMULUS PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM TO MITIGATE  
THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

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

SECTION 1. The Department of Tourism is hereby mandated to formulate and implement an  
Emergency Tourism Stimulus Program for those establishments and tourist sites affected by  
COVID-19.

SECTION 2. The amount of Ten Billion Pesos (Php 10,000,000,000) is hereby appropriated  
to the Department of Tourism to fund said Emergency Tourism Stimulus Program for those  
establishments and tourist sites affected by COVID-19.

SECTION 3. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in English or  
Filipino in the official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation,  
whichever comes first.

Approved,