

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3498**

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Introduced by: **HON. "KUYA" JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO**

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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND MODERNIZING THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) was created by virtue of RA 6975 and is responsible for implementing national policies related to Firefighting and fire prevention as well as implementation and enforcement of the Philippine Fire Code (PD 1185), which has been repealed and replaced by the New Fire Code of the Philippines (RA 9514). BFP is in charge of the administration and management of municipal and city fire and emergency services all over the country. They shall establish at least one (1) fire station with adequate personnel, firefighting facilities and equipment in every provincial capital, city and municipality subject to standard rules and regulations as maybe promulgated by.

But last December 2018, a total of 14,316 fire incidents were recorded for that year, according to the statement of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). The figure is .84 percent higher compared to the same period last 2017.<sup>1</sup>

And in the first two months of this year, the number of fires might have dropped compared to the same period last year, but the number of fire-related deaths had gone up significantly.

As of 2017, the BFP only has 2,350 serviceable fire trucks nationwide, 1,258 units below the standards set by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). There are a total of 351 towns in the country that do not have their own firetrucks.

The Commission on Audit (COA) also note that BFP lacks almost 27,460 firefighters. Aside from the insufficient manpower, only half of the current 23,030 firefighters have basic protective gear. The bureau, according to the COA report, only has: 7,133 fire coats; 6,760 fire trousers; 12,718 fire helmets; 12,357 pairs of fire-resistant gloves; 11,456 pairs of fireman's boots. 1,756 firetrucks out of 2,350 firetrucks are without self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) devices which is a crucial equipment for rescuers going into burning structures. Only 25% is equipped of the said devices.

The State must not let the mandates and functions of the Bureau of Fire Protection be hampered by the scarce of resources.

Thus, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

**"KUYA" JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO**  
Representative  
First District of Bulacan

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<sup>1</sup> (Tupas, 2018)Tupas, E. (2018). *Fire incidents increased by .84 percent in 2018*. PhilStar Global.



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*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 “Fire Protection Modernization Act”.

**SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to develop the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), ensure public safety through the prevention of and suppression of all kinds of destructive fires with the active support of the community. Towards this end, the State shall implement a Fire Protection Modernization Program.

**SECTION 3. *Additional Functions of the BFP.*** – Aside from its existing functions under Republic Act No. 9514 and Republic Act No. 6975, the BFP shall have the following functions:

- a. Be responsible for the prevention and suppression of all destructive fires on buildings, houses and other structures, including those found in economic zones including agro-industrial economic zones, free ports and special economic zones, IT parks/centers, manufacturing economic zones, medical tourism parks/ centers, tourism economic zone, and other similar entities;
- b. Establish and maintain regional arson laboratories and research and testing facilities and complete equipment;
- c. Respond to disasters, whether man-made or natural, and respond to other emergencies, including rescue, emergency medical, hazardous materials (hazmat), chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) materials, and other emergencies;
- d. Conduct monthly fire prevention campaigns and information drive in all local government units, particularly in informal settler areas and economically-depressed areas, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG); and
- e. Require the building owner to submit plans and specifications of the said building and other pertinent documents as may be determined by BFP and evaluate the same to ensure compliance with the Fire Code and other applicable codes and standards. For this purpose, a fire safety evaluation clearance shall be issued as pre-requisite for the issuance of the building permit.

**SECTION 4. *Fire Protection Modernization Program*** - The Bureau of Fire Protection, in coordination with the DILG, shall establish and implement a Fire Protection Modernization Program which shall consist of the following components:

- a) Fire Protection Service – The modernization program shall include the establishments of Fire Protection Service (FPS) in all local government units with no existing fire



protection services, and the establishment of rescue hotlines in all local government units:

- b) Force restructuring and organizational development. – The modernization program shall develop the BFP into a compact, efficient, responsive and modern with the capability to implement Republic Act No. 9514 otherwise known as the Fire Code of the Philippines. The BFP, within ninety days from the promulgation of the implementing rules and regulation (IRR) of this Act, shall recommend and submit to the Secretaries of DILG and Department of Budget and Management the revised organizational structure and staffing pattern for officers and personnel of the BFP. The revised organizational structure shall include all the offices of the BFP, the Fire Training Service, and the BFP Central and Regional Hospitals. The BFP shall design and establish a qualification upgrading program for the BFP officers and personnel in accordance with the Civil Service Commission rules and regulations;
- c) Capability, material, and technology development – The modernization program shall upgrade existing fire protection equipment and services and acquire new equipment for the fire protection: *Provided*, that the acquisition of new equipment shall be synchronized with the phase-out of uneconomical and obsolete major equipment and weapons systems in the BFP inventory;
- d) Specialized services development – The modernization program shall establish specialized fire protection services within the BFP such as but not limited to; high-rise building fires, forest fires, aircraft/ airport fires, ship fires, chemical fires, disaster rescue services, emergency medical services, and the like; and
- e) Human resource development – The modernization program shall include trainings for BFP personnel, and establish training facilities, hire internationally accredited training consultants and advisers if experts of equal qualification cannot be secured locally, to accelerate the personnel development program. All newly appointed uniformed personnel of the BFP shall undergo a Mandatory Training Program.

Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of DILG and the head of the BFP shall submit the details of the Fire Protections Modernization Program to Congress.

**SECTION 5. *Multi-Year Contracts or Other Contractual Arrangement*** – The Secretary of Interior and Local Government may, subject to the approval of the President, under provisions of existing laws and regulations including those of the Commission on Audit and under such terms and conditions favorable to the government, enter into multi-year contracts or other contractual agreements with local or foreign suppliers/ contractors in the implementation of this Act.

**SECTION 6. *Annual Report***. – The BFP shall submit to the Office of the President and Congress, through the Secretary of Interior and Local Government, an annual report containing the process and status of the implementation of the Fire Protection Modernization Program.

**SECTION 7. *Period of Implementation***. – The Fire Protection Modernization Program under this Act, shall be implemented over a period of three (3) years effective upon the date of the approval of this Act; *Provided*, that payments for amortization of outstanding multi-year contract, obligations incurred under the modernization program may extend beyond this period.

**SECTION 8. *Appropriations***. – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be sourced from the BFP modernization trust funds as provided for in Republic Act No. 9514. An additional amount of Five Billion Pesos (Php 5,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated to be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year immediately following the effectivity of this Act.

**SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations***. – Within thirty (30) days from the approval of this Act, the BFP and DILG shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

**SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.*** – Any portion or provision of this Act that is declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

**SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 12. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

