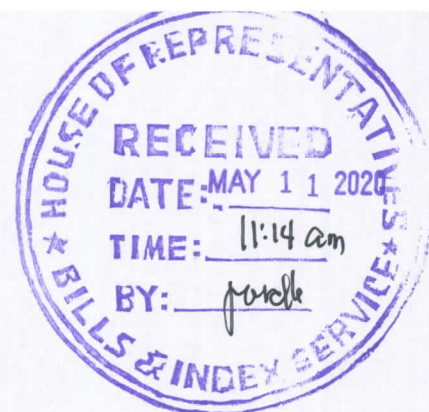


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6710



Introduced by the **Honorable ABRAHAM N. TOLENTINO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The current COVID-19 pandemic has brought and will bring untold stories of financial hardships to millions of Filipinos. Experts have already warned about impending economic privation. As such, this representation is respectfully proposing for the adoption of a law that will suspend the payment of certain obligations during times of crises. This law will not only be applicable during this 2020 COVID-19 pandemic but will likewise be applied during times of calamities or disasters.

The proposed law seeks to provide a moratorium on all electric, water, and telephone bills in times of a state of calamity. The measure will likewise allow citizens to settle said payments on an installment basis. These mechanisms are clearly for upholding the general welfare of Filipinos, helping their financial well-being during and immediately after the presence of natural or man-made calamities or disasters.

This representation believes that the proposition of imposing a moratorium on the payment by citizens for certain obligations during calamities, thru a statute, will not violate the non-impairment clause. It is axiomatic that non-impairment clause is overridden by the police power of the state. As reiterated by the Supreme Court in *Phil-Am Life v. Auditor General* (G.R. L-19255, January 18, 1968), the constitutional guaranty of non-impairment is limited by the exercise of the police power of the State, in the interest of public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.

Further, giving Filipinos an economic reprieve on payments for electricity, water, telecommunications bills during a state of calamity is in consonance with the advancement of social justice, as enunciated in our Constitution.

Approval of the bill is earnestly sought.

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HOUSE BILL NO. 6710

Introduced by the Honorable ABRAHAM N. TOLENTINO

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT SCHEME ON BASIC UTILITY BILLS DURING CLAMITES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES TO BE KNOWN AS "THE THREE-GIVES LAW"

SECTION 1. **Short Title** – This Act shall be known as the *Three Gives Act*.

SECTION 2. **Declaration of Policy** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the general welfare, public safety, health and economic security of the Filipino people in times of calamity, natural or man-made.

SECTION 3. **Coverage** – The law shall cover all residential electric, water, and telecommunication bills, and shall apply when a state of calamity is declared.

SECTION 4. **Moratorium** – There shall be a moratorium on all payments for residential electric, water, and telecommunication bills, during the entire duration of a state of calamity, provided that, nothing in this law shall prevent the voluntary payment by customers.

SECTION 5. **Continuity of Service** – All holders of public utility franchises and other service providers, are prohibited from collecting payment and discontinuing the services it provides during the entire duration of a state calamity.

SECTION 6. **Installment Payments** – Any amount due and demandable during the moratorium period shall be payable in three (3) equal monthly installments, without interest, which shall accrue a month after the cessation of a state of calamity.

SECTION 7. **Penalty** - All public utility franchises and other service providers, who are found to have violated any provision of this Act shall be punished with a fine of not more than One Million Pesos (P 1,000,000.00) for each violation.

SECTION 8. **Implementation** – This law shall be implemented by the Local Water Utilities Administration, Energy Regulatory Commission, National Electrification

Commission, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, and such other concerned government offices.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause – If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to have force and effect.

SECTION 11. Effectivity Clause – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in newspapers of general circulation.