

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. B. No. 5966

Introduced by Batangas Representatives

Rep. Vilma Santos-Recto, Rep. Elenita Milagros Ermita-Buhain, Rep. Raneo E. Abu,
Rep. Ma. Theresa V. Collantes, Rep. Lianda B. Bolilia and Rep. Mario Vittorio A. Mariño

AN ACT

CREATING THE TAAL VOLCANO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, ESTABLISHING THE TAAL VOLCANO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXTENDING AID, RELIEF, RESETTLEMENT, REHABILITATION, LIVELIHOOD, AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The eruption of Taal Volcano that began on January 12, 2020 and has persisted until the present has impacted the lives and livelihood of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos, particularly Batangueños, in the country. Based on the most recent situation report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), the Taal Volcano eruption has affected 50,599 families or 203,763 Filipinos, with 26,767 families or 104,377 individuals taking temporary shelter in 408 evacuation centers in CALABARZON Region, while another 17,391 families or 68,755 persons are being served outside evacuation centers. Enforcement of full and partial lockdowns in the municipalities of Agoncillo, Alitagtag, Balete, Cuenca, Laurel, Lemery, Malvar, San Nicolas, Sta Teresita, Taal, Talisay, Parts of Lipa City, Parts of Mataas Na Kahoy, and Parts of Tanauan City, however, is estimated to displace roughly half a million population in affected communities. It has caused power interruptions in 20 cities and municipalities, and has forced 264 local government units to declare suspension of classes. The eruption had also paralyzed the operation of Ninoy Aquino International Airport and Diosdado Macapagal International Airport for about three days, forcing airlines to cancel 383 domestic and 260 scheduled international flights. NDRRMC also reported that the eruption affected thousands of hectares of agricultural lands and fishing

also reported that the eruption affected thousands of hectares of agricultural lands and fishing areas, primarily in the province of Batangas, which caused an estimated three billion pesos' worth of agricultural damage incurred by farmers, livestock raisers and fishermen. These losses, however, only foreshadow the economic and financial costs of the eruption, particularly in terms of local tourism losses; reconstruction and rehabilitation requirements; and healthcare, evacuation and relief operations costs, which is expected to reach tens of billions of pesos.

This proposed measure seeks to strengthen the mechanisms of government to address the needs of families and communities affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano. It seeks to establish a Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund, which allocates fifty billion pesos (P50,000,000,000) to provide immediate relief to affected individuals and families; establish resettlement centers, homesites and townsites for displaced families; provide livelihood and employment opportunities for local residents; construct, repair, rehabilitate, or reconstruct public infrastructure needed in the affected communities; and to adopt and implement other interventions that could expedite the return to normalcy in affected localities. The bill also allows Congress to increase this amount through a supplemental budget or through the annual general appropriations.

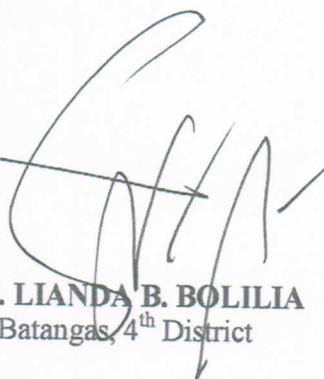
Additionally, the bill seeks to establish a Taal Rehabilitation and Development Commission to provide structure and direction in the utilization of the Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund. The Taal Commission shall be comprised of five (5) members from the Cabinet; a Vice Chairperson and Executive Director; two (2) representatives from non-government and civil society organizations; and the Executive Director of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), and the Governors of the provinces of Batangas and Cavite as *ex-officio* members. The Taal Commission shall be mandated to prescribe the overall strategic framework in using the Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund to address the needs of the affected communities; to spearhead the disaster relief and rehabilitation operations; and to identify, prioritize and implement priority programs and projects to provide aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, livelihood and development services to localities affected by the Taal Volcano eruption, among others.

hopes that the return to normalcy will aid not only in the economic prosperity of the Southern Tagalog Region, but of the entire country as well.

In light of the foregoing, immediate passage of the bill is earnestly sought.



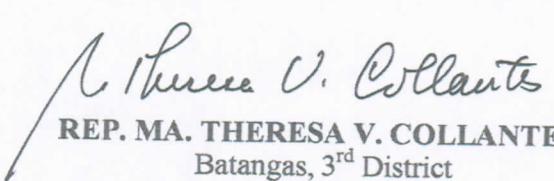
REP. VILMA SANTOS-RECTO
Batangas, 6th District



REP. LIANDA B. BOLILIA
Batangas, 4th District

REP. ELENITA MILAGROS ERMITA-BUHAIN
Batangas, 1st District

REP. RANEO E. ABU
Batangas, 2nd District



REP. MA. THERESA V. COLLANTES
Batangas, 3rd District



REP. MARIO VITTORIO A. MARIÑO
Batangas, 5th District

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. B. No. 5966

Introduced by Batangas Representatives

5 Rep. Vilma Santos-Recto, Rep. Elenita Milagros Ermita-Buhain, Rep. Raneo E. Abu,
6 Rep. Ma. Theresa V. Collantes, Rep. Lianda B. Bolilia and Rep. Mario Vittorio A. Marino

AN ACT

AN ACT

CREATING THE TAAL VOLCANO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, ESTABLISHING THE TAAL VOLCANO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXTENDING 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:

7 Section 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and
8 Development Act.”

9 Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
10 extend assistance to individuals, families and communities in difficult circumstances brought
11 about by catastrophic meteorological, hydrological, and geological events. Towards this end,
12 the State shall provide programs and services to individuals and communities affected by the
13 Taal Volcano Eruption in 2020 and its aftermath to ensure that the lives of individuals and
14 communities in affected provinces, cities and municipalities may return to normalcy at the
15 earliest possible time and that the economic gains and development in the affected localities
16 are sustained and accelerated.

17 Sec. 3. *Statement of Objectives.* – This Act is intended to provide assistance to
18 victims, and individuals and communities affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano and its
19 aftermath through the provision of funds for the immediate relief; establishment of
20 resettlement centers, homesites and townsites, particularly for those living within the
21 volcano's permanent danger zone; provision of livelihood and employment opportunities;

1 construction, repair, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of public infrastructure; and the adoption
2 and implementation of other interventions to expedite the return to normalcy in affected
3 localities.

4 The Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Commission, created in Section 6
5 of this Act, shall prioritize victims of the Taal Volcano eruption and its aftermath in the
6 provision of programs and services under this Act. The term "victims" shall refer to the
7 following:

8 (a) Individuals who perished or disappeared as a result of the Taal Volcano
9 eruption or its aftermath;

10 (b) Individuals who suffered death in the family as a result of the Taal Volcano
11 eruption or its aftermath;

12 (c) Individuals who were displaced or injured as a result of the Taal Volcano and
13 its aftermath;

14 (d) Individuals whose dwellings have been damaged, rendered uninhabitable, or
15 destroyed as a result of the Taal Volcano and its aftermath; and

16 (e) Individuals whose sources of livelihood have been permanently lost as a result
17 of the Taal Volcano and its aftermath.

18 Sec. 4. *Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Fund.* – The Taal Volcano
19 Rehabilitation and Development Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Taal Fund, is hereby
20 created with a funding of Fifty Billion Pesos (P50,000,000,000) to carry out the purposes of
21 this Act. Donations and grants from foreign and domestic sources made for the purpose of
22 providing aid, relief and rehabilitation services in areas affected by the eruption of Taal
23 Volcano shall form part of the Taal Fund. The amount may be augmented by appropriations
24 from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund as provided in Republic
25 Act No. 11260 and Republic Act No. 11465, otherwise known as the General Appropriations
26 Act for Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020, respectively. In the subsequent years, Congress may
27 increase the amount allocated to the Taal Fund through a supplemental budget or through the
28 annual general appropriations.

29 Sec. 5. *Guidelines in Allocation and Utilization of the Taal Fund.* – The following
30 guidelines shall be observed in the utilization of the Taal Fund:

31 (a) The Taal Fund can be used to augment aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation
32 and livelihood programs and projects implemented by government agencies concerned for the
33 victims of the Taal Volcano eruption and its aftermath in the affected communities: *Provided*,
34 That any program or project charged against the Taal Fund shall only be deemed

1 complementary and supplementary to and shall not be a replacement of any existing program,
2 project or activity on disaster relief, risk reduction and management already implemented by
3 the government agencies concerned, including local government units;

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

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

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

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

17 *Sec. 6. Taal Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Commission.* – The Taal
18 Volcano Rehabilitation and Development Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Taal
19 Commission, is hereby created to carry out interventions necessary for the realization of the
20 purposes of this Act.

21 The Taal Commission shall be organized within thirty (30) days after the approval of
22 this Act. It shall have a term of six (6) years from its organization: *Provided*, That the
23 President may, through the issuance of a proclamation within six (6) months prior to the
24 expiration of the term, extend the term once for not more than a period of three (3) years. For
25 the purpose of coordination and administration, the Taal Commission shall be attached to the
26 Office of the President.

27 *Sec. 7. Powers and Functions of the Taal Commission.* – To carry out its objectives
28 under this Act, the Taal Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

29 (a) To prescribe the overall strategic framework in the utilization of the Taal Fund as
30 provided in Section 4 of this Act;

31 (b) To formulate policies and plans for the implementation of aid, relief,
32 resettlement, rehabilitation, livelihood, and development programs and services to
33 communities adversely affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano and its aftermath, in

1 harmony with the plans and policies of other agencies and instrumentalities of the National
2 Government;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

23 (j) To call upon any department, office, instrumentality, agency, or any political
24 subdivision of the government for assistance, including the detail or secondment of essential
25 personnel, as may be necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the Taal Commission;
26 and

27 (k) To perform such other powers as may be necessary and proper to carry out the
28 purposes of this Act.

29 Sec. 8. *Composition of the Taal Commission.* – The Taal Commission shall be
30 composed of the following members:

- 31 (a) Secretary of Agriculture as *ex-officio* member;
- 32 (b) Secretary of Budget and Management as *ex-officio* member
- 33 (c) Secretary Labor and Employment as *ex-officio* member;
- 34 (d) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development as *ex-officio* member;

- (e) Secretary of Public Works and Highways as *ex-officio* member;
 - (f) Vice-Chairperson and Executive Director to be appointed by the President;
 - (g) Two (2) members from non-government and civil society organizations engaged in disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts to be appointed by the President;
 - (h) Executive Director of NDRRMC as *ex-officio* member;
 - (i) Governor of the Province of Batangas as *ex-officio* member; and
 - (j) Governor of the Province of Cavite as *ex-officio* member.

8 The President shall designate from among the *ex-officio* members of the Taal Commission
9 the Chairperson thereof. The Executive Director and members of the Taal Commission shall
10 serve for a term of six (6) years unless sooner terminated for cause or further extended
11 pursuant to Section 6 of this Act.

12 Sec. 9. *Powers and Responsibilities of the Executive Director.* – The Executive
13 Director of the Taal Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- 14 (a) To execute and administer the policies and decisions of the Taal Commission;

15 (b) To manage the day-to-day operation of the Taal Commission;

16 (c) To directly coordinate the activities of all agencies and instrumentalities of the

17 Government in the planning and implementation of projects in affected communities;

18 (d) To monitor the programs and projects and evaluate the effects of execution by

19 these agencies and instrumentalities;

20 (e) To submit to the Taal Commission periodic reports relating to the development

21 of the affected communities; and

22 (f) To perform such other powers as may be necessary and proper to carry out the

23 purposes of this Act.

24 Sec. 10. *Implementation of Programs and Projects.* – The agencies of government
25 involved with the aid, relief, resettlement, rehabilitation and livelihood services as well as
26 infrastructure support shall be the implementing agencies of the Taal Commission in
27 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

1 organizations in the implementation of priority programs and projects as provided in Section
2 11 of this Act and in accordance with existing rules and regulations.

3 *Sec. 11 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.

9 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.

14 *Sec. 12. 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.

18 *Sec. 13. 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:

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

23 (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

28 (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.

32 *Sec. 14. Appropriations for the Taal Fund.* – The amount of Fifty Billion Pesos (P50,000,000,000) is hereby appropriated from any available funds in the National Treasury

1 not otherwise appropriated. Such amount shall remain valid until the dissolution of the Taal
2 Commission.

3 The release and validity of the allotments from the Taal Fund shall be subject to the
4 specific guidelines and procedures as may be issued by the Department of Budget and
5 Management (DBM) upon consultation with the Taal Commission: *Provided*, That the
6 release of the said amount shall be programmed as follows:

7 (a) From the approval of this Act to December 31, 2020, the sum of Thirty Billion
8 Pesos (P30,000,000,000);

9 (b) For fiscal year 2021, the sum of Ten Billion Pesos (P10,000,000,000); and

10 (c) For fiscal year 2022, the sum of Ten Billion Pesos (P10,000,000,000).

11 *Provided*, That undisbursed amounts at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried over to the
12 succeeding fiscal year.

13 Sec. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The President shall issue the
14 necessary implementing rules and regulations within thirty (30) days upon the approval of
15 this Act.

16 Sec. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, section or part of this Act shall be
17 declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, invalidate or impair any
18 other provisions, sections or parts hereof.

19 Sec. 17. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, issuances, and
20 rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to and inconsistent with this Act are
21 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

22 Sec. 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
23 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,