



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2469**

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JOEL MAYO Z. ALMARIO**

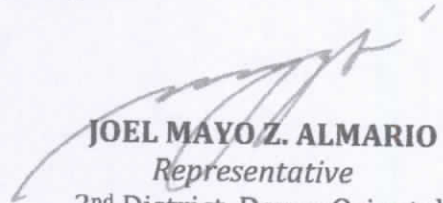
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines continues to experience disastrous fires. Each year, thousands of lives and billions worth of property are gutted by fire. To be precise, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) records show that there is an average of 42 fire incidents a day resulting in roughly 850 fire-related injuries and over 250 fire-related deaths each year.

Despite this, the BFP is one of the most undermanned and underfunded government agencies. In fact, in a report released by the Commission on Audit (COA) last June 29, 2018, the BFP was flagged for insufficient manpower and shortage of fire trucks. COA auditors noted that there were only 23,030 firefighters which is less than half the ideal number of 50,490 firefighters or one fireman for every 2,000 people. Aside from insufficient manpower, only half of BFP personnel have basic protective gear including fire coats, trousers, helmets, gloves and boots. The bureau also lacks self-contained breathing apparatus devices that rescuers need to enter burning structures. It was also found that BFP falls short by about 30% of the standard of one fire truck for every 28,000 residents.

This bill seeks to assist the bureau in strengthening their ranks by adding to their personnel and ensuring that each field worker receives the necessary protective gear. The construction of fire stations and the provision of fire trucks, fire hoses, nozzles and breathing apparatus to enhance the BFP's fire-fighting capability is also envisioned. Through the passage of this bill, it is hoped that our noble firefighters become fully equipped to protect all the Filipino people.

Support for this bill is earnestly sought.


JOEL MAYO Z. ALMARIO
Representative

2nd District, Davao Oriental



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

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

1 **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the *"Fire Protection Modernization Act of*
2 *2019."*

3

4 **SECTION 2.** In addition to the existing functions under Republic Act No. 6975
5 otherwise known as the *"Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of*
6 *1990"* and Republic Act No. 9514 otherwise known as the *"Revised Fire Code of the*
7 *Philippines of 2008"*, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) shall be have the following
8 functions:

9

10 a) Be responsible for the prevention and suppression of all destructive fires in
11 buildings, houses and other structures, including those found in economic
12 zones including agro-industrial economic zones, free ports and special
13 economic zones, IT parks/centers, manufacturing economic zones, medical
14 tourism parks/centers, tourism economic zone, and other similar entities;

15

16 b) Establish and maintain regional arson laboratories and research and testing
17 facilities with complete equipment;

18 c) Respond to disasters, whether manmade or natural, and respond to other
19 emergencies, including rescue, medical emergencies, hazardous materials,
20 chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive materials, and other
21 emergencies;

22
23 d) Conduct monthly fire prevention campaigns and information drive in all
24 local government units, particularly in areas heavily populated by informal
25 settlers in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local
26 Government (DILG); and

27
28 e) Require building owners to submit plans and specifications of the said
29 building and other pertinent documents as may be determined by BFP and
30 evaluate the same to ensure compliance with the Fire Code and other
31 applicable codes and standards. For this purpose, a fire safety evaluation
32 clearance shall be issued as a prerequisite for the issuance of the building
33 permit.

34
35 **SECTION 4.** The Bureau of Fire Protection, in coordination with the DILG, shall
36 establish and implement a Fire Protection Modernization Program which shall
37 consist of the following components:

38
39 a) Fire Protection Service - The modernization program shall include the
40 establishment of Fire Protection Service (FPS) in all local government units
41 with no existing fire protection services, and the establishment of rescue
42 hotlines in all local government units;

43
44 b) Forced Restructuring and Organizational Development. - The modernization
45 program shall develop the BFP into a compact, efficient, responsive and modern
46 with the capability to implement Republic Act No. 9514 otherwise known as
47 the "*Fire Code of the Philippines*". The BFP, within ninety (90) days from the
48 promulgation of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of this Act, shall
49 recommend and submit to the Secretaries of DLLG and Department of Budget
50 and Management the revised organizational structure and staffing pattern for
51 officers and personnel of the BFP. The revised organizational structure shall
52 include all the offices of the BFP, the Fire Training Service, and the BFP

Central and Regional Hospitals. The BFP shall likewise design and establish a qualifications 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 of new equipment for 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. Internationally accredited training consultants and foreign advisers may be contracted 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 Protection Modernization Program to both Houses of Congress.

SECTION 5. 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. The BFP shall submit to the Office of the President and to both Houses of Congress, through the Secretary of Interior and Local Government, an annual report

88 containing the process and status of the implementation of the Fire Protection
89 Modernization Program.

90

91 **SECTION 7.** The Fire Protection Modernization Program under this Act, shall be
92 implemented over a period of three (3) years effective upon the date of the approval
93 of such: *Provided*, That payments for amortization of outstanding multi-year contract
94 and obligations incurred under the modernization program may extend beyond this
95 period.

96

97 **SECTION 8.** The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be
98 sourced from the BFP Modernization Trust Fund as provided for in Republic Act No.
99 9514. An additional amount of Five Billion Pesos (P5,000,000,000.00) is hereby
100 appropriated to be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year
101 immediately following the effectivity of this Act.

102

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

106

107 **SECTION 10.** Should any portion or provision of this Act be deemed unconstitutional,
108 the remaining provisions shall not be nullified and shall be given full effect in its
109 entirety.

110

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

113

114 **SECTION 12.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
115 Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation, whichever comes sooner.

116

117 *Approved.*