



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 8943

BY REPRESENTATIVES VILLAFUERTE, TAMBUNTING, CABOCHAN, TORRES-GOMEZ, FERRER (J.M.), DIMAPORO (M.K.), BABASA, DEFENSOR (L.), REVILLA, SAVELLANO, SANGCOPAN, PACQUIAO (A.), DELOSO-MONTALLA, NUÑEZ-MALANYAON, VILLARICA, DEL MAR, GUYA, AUMENTADO, BAÑAS-NOGRALES AND LEGARDA, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 827

AN ACT
REQUIRING DISASTER-RELATED INFORMATION TO BE STATED IN
ACCESSIBLE LANGUAGE TO ENSURE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING THEREOF

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

1 **SEC. 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as “Language Accessibility of
2 Public Information on Disasters Act.”

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4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The right of the people to information on
5 matters of public concern is recognized in our Constitution. Indeed, communication
6 and information occupy a vital role in nation-building. In times of disaster and other
7 emergencies, and to render meaningful and effective the right of the people to
8 information, it shall be ensured that announcements, advisories and similar public
9 communications are accessible in terms of the language or dialect used.

1 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

2 a. Disaster – a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society
3 involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and
4 impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using
5 its own resources.

6 Disasters are often described as a result of the combination of: the exposure to
7 a hazard; the conditions of vulnerability that are present; and insufficient capacity or
8 measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative consequences, Disaster
9 impacts may include loss of life, injury, disease and other negative effects on human,
10 physical, mental and social well-being, together with damage to property, destruction
11 of assets, loss of services, social and economic disruption and environmental
12 degradation;

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14 b. Emergency – unforeseen or sudden occurrence, especially danger,
15 demanding immediate action;

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17 c. State of Calamity - a condition involving mass casualty and/or major
18 damages to property and roads, disruption of means of livelihoods, and normal way of
19 life of people in the affected areas as a result of the occurrence of a natural or human-
20 induced hazard.

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22 **SEC. 4. Scope of Application.** – This Act shall cover disasters and other kinds
23 of emergencies which are (1) national in scope, as declared through a State of
24 Calamity or State of National Emergency by the President of the Philippines and (2)
25 provincial, city, or municipal in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity or
26 Emergency by the appropriate local government unit.

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SEC. 5. Language Accessibility of Disaster-Related Information

In relation to disasters and other emergencies covered by Section 4 of this Act, it shall be mandatory for all government agencies and local government units to convert in an easily understandable form and translate to Filipino and any other appropriate regional language/s or dialect/s all their announcements, advisories, press releases, issuances, and any other information relevant to such disaster or emergency, including:

- a) Tropical Cyclones, signals, and other advisories by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAG-ASA);
- b) Volcano, Earthquake, tsunami, and landslide advisories and bulletins by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS);
- c) Announcements, bulletins, and other advisories of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs) and network of Disaster Risk Reduction Management Councils composed of national, regional, provincial, city, municipal DRRM councils and barangay DRRM committees;
- d) Information on epidemics, outbreaks, and public health emergencies of the Department of Health (DOH);
- e) Advisories and warnings released by DENR-MGB, human-induced hazards, BFP advisories, AFP and PNP human security concerns; and
- f) Information on the Social Amelioration Program, emergency assistance, and other social protection measures of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

1 **SEC. 6. Translation to Filipino and Other Regional Language or Dialect. –**

2 The translation of the information covered by this Act shall be to Filipino and other
3 regional language/s or dialect/s, as deemed necessary by the government agency and
4 local government unit concerned considering the geographical location of the affected
5 communities and the intended recipients of the information. The translated information
6 shall be disseminated as widely as possible through all available media and
7 communication channels.

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9 **SEC. 7. Role of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino. –** The Komisyon sa
10 Wikang Filipino (KWF) shall render the necessary technical assistance and expertise
11 to the government agencies and local government units including the Bangsamoro
12 Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and monitor their compliance with
13 the duties mandated by this Act.

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15 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. –** Within sixty (60) days from
16 the Effectivity of this Act, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), in consultation with
17 other relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and
18 regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

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20 **SEC. 9. Repealing Clause. –** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
21 proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the
22 provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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24 **SEC. 10. Separability Clause. –** If any provision or part of this Act, or the
25 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid,
26 the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

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SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after

its publication in the Official Gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved