

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**THIRTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session



**HOUSE BILL NO. 3599**

***Introduced by Representative Rafael P. Nantes***

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Tropical depressions and typhoons that visit the Philippine area of responsibility yearly place our country in a gripping and unstable situation in terms of economic recovery every time they leave the country devastated. Typhoons and their harsh effects directly contribute to the worsening of the already unstable economic condition of the country. The government spends billions of pesos to rehabilitate areas placed in a state of calamity due to typhoons.

Such natural disasters and their severe effects are inevitable. We are without options to stop their occurrence but we can mitigate their effects by the use of science and advanced technologies to support our country's disaster-preparedness. We, however, do not have the luxury of such advanced technologies because of our meager resources. And out of these meager resources, only minimal is appropriated as funds for the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the government agency responsible for the scientific forecasting and monitoring of atmospheric, geophysical and astronomical condition in the Philippines.

We cannot deny the essential role of PAGASA in public health and safety and in the economy as a whole since loss of life and property can be minimized if not totally averted if the people are guarded against the impending perils of typhoons and other natural occurrence that causes devastation in the large scale through accurate forecasting and monitoring of the same.

The recent typhoons that hit the country left traces of devastation in large magnitude in hard-hit provinces in Luzon and Visayas. A large number of people were declared dead or missing and property, crops, livestock, infrastructure and forest resources amounting to billions of pesos were destroyed. About P 4.69 B damage to crops, fishing and infrastructure was caused by the same typhoons or tropical depressions. The increase in the number of casualties can be attributed to the lack of preparedness of the people affected by the typhoons. Most of the people who perished in the floods, landslides and turbulent seas caused by the typhoons were not forewarned of the same. These should have been averted had the government equipped PAGASA with the necessary technology to do its job.

An average of 19 typhoons or tropical depressions visit the country every year. According to the reports of the PAGASA and the NDCC the following are the most destructive typhoons or tropical depression that visited the Philippines from 1948-2004:

| Name     | Date                  | Areas Hit                    | Casualties |         | Damages (PB) |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------|---------|--------------|
|          |                       |                              | Death      | Injured |              |
| Rosing   | Oct. 31- Nov. 3, 1995 | NCR, CAR, Regions I-IV& VIII | 936        | 4,152   | 10.83        |
| Kadiang  | Sept. 30-Oct. 7, 1993 | CAR, Regions I-III           | 576        | 337     | 8.75         |
| TS Uring | Nov. 2-6, 1991        | Regions VI-VIII              | 5,101      | 292     | 1.05         |
| Ruping   | Nov. 10-14, 1990      | NCR, Regions III-XII         | 508        | 1,278   | 10.85        |
| Sisang   | Nov. 23-27, 1987      | Regions IV, V & VIII         | 808        | 927     | 1.12         |
| Undang   | Nov. 3-6, 1984        | Regions IV-VIII              | 895        | 2,526   | 1.54         |
| Nitang   | Au.31-Sept. 4, 1984   | Regions IV, VI-VIII & X-XI   | 900        | 1,856   | 3.91         |
| Titang   | Oct. 16-22, 1970      | Regions VI and Mindanao      | 631        | 76      | 0.305        |
| Sening   | Sept. 12-15, 1970     | Regions II-IV & VI           | 575        | 1,593   | 0.079        |
| Trix     | Oct. 17-22, 1952      | Region V                     | 995        |         | 0.088        |

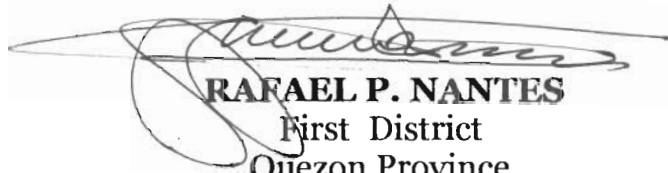
Around 18 million Filipinos were affected by the onslaught of typhoons Unding, Violeta, Winnie and Yoyong that hit the country the months of November and December 2004, according to the reports of the DSWD. Hardest hit is the Province of Quezon. The DSWD reports the following:

| Name    | Death | Injured | Missing |
|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| Unding  | 65    |         | 69      |
| Violeta | 26    | 14      | 4       |
| Winnie  | 500   | 373     | 607     |
| Yoyong  | 37    | 32      | 38      |

These facts alone should put us continually on guard and ready of their coming to minimize loss of lives and property. Indeed, the lack of modern facilities of PAGASA is directly linked to the effects that the typhoons caused to the country. What better way to do this but to equip the PAGASA the state-of-art facilities and equipments for the accurate and prompt forecasting and reporting of approaching typhoons or tropical depressions and other natural calamities.

It is therefore but wise to provide for the modernization of PAGASA for public safety considering the foregoing.

Wherefore, the passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



**RAFAEL P. NANTES**  
First District  
Quezon Province

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
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THIRTEENTH CONGRESS  
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HOUSE BILL NO. 3599

*Introduced by Representatives Rafael P. Nantes*

**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE**  
**ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES**  
**ADMINISTRATION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR**  
**OTHER PURPOSES.**

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

**SECTION 1. Title.** This Act shall be known as the "PAGASA Modernization Act of 2005."

**SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to improve weather forecasting in the country and to ensure its accuracy and timely dissemination to the public. Towards this end, the State shall undertake the modernization of the national weather service to ensure the safety and well-being of the people and to ensure national progress.

In the implementation of the foregoing policy, the State shall, in accordance with the provisions of this Act:

- (a) undertake measures to improve on the current state of weather forecasting and warning system in the country;
- (b) cultivate greater awareness by the public of weather systems through the educational projects and programs in storm signals, the development of typhoons, climatic changes, and other related information;
- (c) upgrade, modernize and procure state-of-the art weather and geophysical equipment, instruments and facilities, and the application of new technologies to improve our

capabilities in providing timely and reliable forecasting, warning services, and information for agriculture, transportation and other industries across the country.

**SEC. 3. Components of Modernization.** To realize improved and enhance weather and flood forecasting, climate monitoring/prediction and astronomical and associated services, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) shall undertake a 6-year modernization program. Toward this end, the PAGASA shall adopt the following four-pronged principal approaches, in the order of priority:

- (a) establishment of regional weather service centers strategic areas in the country to broaden the agency's base3s for delivery of services to the countryside;
- (b) modernization of physical resources and operational techniques through acquisition of state-of-the-art instruments, equipment and facilities, with emphasis on weather and flood monitoring and warning system and agrometeorological observational system to strengthen services for agriculture;
- (c) intensification of human resources development to keep at pace with the rapid scientific and technological advances;
- (d) upgrading of research and development capability through a more rationalized and totally integrated approach and identified activities, with focus on improvement of operations, as well as the development of specialized services for cost recovery.

**SEC. 4. Program Description.** The modernization program under this Act shall principally be a re-tooling and upgrading of the PAGASA with modern equipment and facilities, including but not limited to advanced observational and surveillance system for meteorological and hydrological elements, whenever possible satellite-based communication network, supercomputers for data processing analyses and forecasting, and computer based workstations for generating increased volume for detailed information. It shall also establish an efficient human resources development program that emphasizes on professional education, training and research.

**SEC. 5. PAGASA Modernization Oversight Committee.** There is hereby created a Modernization Oversight Committee composed of the Secretary of Science and Technology (DOST), the Director of the PAGASA, the Chairperson of the Congressional Committees on Science and Technology, and a representative from the Office of the President, through the Project Monitoring Staff of the National and Economic development Authority (NEDA), who shall oversee the implementation of the modernization program provided under this Act. The Committee shall be chaired by the Secretary of the DOST.

**SEC. 6. PAGASA Modernization Fund.** There is hereby created the PAGASA Modernization Fund which shall be used exclusively to fund the

modernization program which shall include whatever funds may be made available from, but not limited to the following sources:

- (a) Eight million pesos (₱ 8M) per month for the next six (6) years to be generated from the net income of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) to be taken from the fifty percent (50%) share of the National Government.
- (b) Loans, grant, bequests and donations whether from local or foreign sources. The Secretary of the DOST with the approval of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and subsequently the Department of Finance is hereby granted the authority to enter into loan agreements with foreign financial institutions.

**SEC. 7. Cost Recovery Measures.** PAGASA, with the approval of the DOST Secretary, shall implement a sustainable cost recovery program that will allow it to earn revenue from its issuance of specialized weather information, certifications and scientific and technical publications for which the necessary fees can be charged; *Provided*, that one hundred percent (100%) of the fees collected shall be retained by PAGASA for the next twenty (20) years starting six (6) years after the effectivity of this Act, for the operation and maintenance of the equipment acquired during the modernization program; *Provided, however*, that no fees shall be charged on the issuance of regular and special reports to the general public that affect national safety, weather and economic, and such other relevant data;

**SEC. 8. Progress Report.** The Secretary of the DOST and the Director of the PAGASA shall submit to the Office of the President and the Congressional Committees on Science and Technology a quarterly report on the progress of the modernization program for the duration of its implementation.

**SEC. 9. Repeal of Inconsistent Laws.** All laws, orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or part thereof, which are inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 10. Effectivity of this Act.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,