

Republic of the Philippines

House of Representatives
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2796**



**Introduced by Honorable Anthony M. Bravo and Honorable
Cresente C. Paez**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is well known for its extraordinary beaches. Hence, the beaches, especially those used most by the public, should be tested to make sure the water is safe for swimming for both locals and tourists.

This bill requires the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to: (1) prepare an annual assessment of the compliance of local governments with program requirements; (2) update within 12 months after the effectivity of this Act and biennially after the enactment, the list indicating which coastal recreational waters adjacent to beaches used by the public are, and which of such waters are not, subject to a monitoring and notification program; and (3) study and report to Congress on the long-term impact of climate change on pollution of coastal recreational waters.

This bill further proposes a 2015 deadline for the DENR Secretary to complete its validation of a rapid testing method, which would provide beachgoers with same day information on beach water safety.


HON. ANTHONY M. BRAVO


HON. CRESENTE C. PAEZ

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13 **AN ACT**
14 **PROVIDING PROGRAMS FOR BEACH MONITORING**

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

15 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Clean Coastal Environment
16 and Public Health Act of 2013.”

17 SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- 18 (A) *Rapid Testing Method* means a method of testing the water quality of coastal
19 recreation waters for which results are available as soon as practicable and
20 not more than 2 hours after the commencement of the rapid testing method;
21 (B) *Secretary* means the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural
22 Resources;

23 SECTION 3. *Contents of Monitoring and Notification Programs.* – A program for
24 monitoring and notification shall include monitoring consistent with the performance criteria as
25 determined by the Secretary, public notification, source tracking, sanitary surveys, and
26 prevention efforts to address identified sources of contamination by pathogens and pathogen
27 indicators in coastal recreation waters adjacent to beaches or similar points of access that are
28 used by the public.

29 SECTION 4. *Validation of Rapid Testing Methods.* – Not later than two years after the
30 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary shall complete an evaluation and validation of a rapid testing
31 method for the water quality criteria and standards for pathogens and pathogen indicators.

1 SECTION 5. *Guidance for Use of Rapid Testing Methods.* – Not later than 180 days after
2the date of completion of the validation and after providing notice and an opportunity for public
3comment, the Secretary shall publish guidance for the use at coastal recreation waters adjacent to
4beaches or similar points of access that are used by the public of rapid testing methods that will
5enhance the protection of public health and safety through rapid public notification of any
6exceedance of applicable water quality standards for pathogens and pathogen indicators.

7 In developing guidance, the Secretary shall require the use of rapid testing methods at
8those beaches or similar points of access that are the most used by the public.

9 SECTION 6. *Information Dissemination.* – The Secretary shall provide information to
10the public about coastal recreation waters, which is publicly accessible and searchable on the
11Internet; organized by beach or similar point of access; identifies applicable water quality
12standards, monitoring protocols, sampling plans and results, and the number and cause of coastal
13recreation water closures and advisory days; and updated within 24 hours of the availability of
14revised information;

15 SECTION 7. *National List of Beaches.* – Not later than 1 year after the effectivity of this
16Act, the Secretary shall make a National List of Beaches, which shall be updated biennially.

17 SECTION 8. *Compliance Review.* – On or before 31 July of each calendar year beginning
18after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary shall:

- 19 (A) prepare a written assessment of compliance with all statutory and regulatory
20 requirements of this Act for each local government;
21 (B) notify the local government of each such assessment; and
22 (C) make each of the assessments available to the public in a searchable database on the
23 Internet on or before 31 December of the applicable calendar year.

24 SECTION 9. *Impact of Climate Change on the Pollution of Coastal Recreation Waters.* –
25The Secretary shall conduct a study on the long-term impact of climate change on pollution of
26coastal recreation waters. A report on the study shall be submitted to Congress.

27 The report shall include information on potential contaminant impacts on ground and
28surface water resources; and public and ecosystem health in coastal communities. The report

1 shall also address monitoring required to document and assess changing conditions of coastal
2 water resources, recreational waters, and ecosystems; and review the current ability to assess and
3 forecast impacts associated with long-term change.

4 SECTION 10. *Impact of Algae on Coastal Recreation Waters.* – Not later than 1 year
5 after the date of effectivity of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a study on the
6 impact of algae on coastal recreation waters. The following should be considered in preparing
7 the study: (a) quantify the levels of algae that cause problems at recreational beaches; and (b)
8 quantify the concentrations of phosphorus that may be associated with algae problems;

9 SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or
10 unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
11 valid and subsisting.

12 SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
13 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent
14 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

15 SECTION 13. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
16 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,