

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2802



Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE
ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The onslaught of several natural disasters in recent years has strengthened the calls to modernize the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) in order to enhance its capability in providing services to protect the people and the environment from perennial natural hazards. Last year alone, typhoons *Ondoy* and *Pepeng* devastated the Philippines leaving most parts of the country submerged for months. Some quarters blamed PAGASA's lack of foresight and outmoded equipment and facilities as the culprit. But just this recently, the second typhoon which reached Philippine shores, typhoon *Basyang*, made another mockery of PAGASA's capabilities when it directly hit Metro Manila, a far cry from the weather station's bold forecast that it will not, in any way, affect NCR. All of these show that no matter how bright and intellectual personnel we put in PAGASA, as long as they do not have advanced and cutting-edge equipment to get the job done, our people and their properties will continue to suffer from natural disasters.

Several significant advances in the technologies used in monitoring meteorological and geological developments however have proven useful tools in mitigating the perils associated with natural disasters. Accordingly, it would be in

everyone's best interest to equip PAGASA with these modern day breakthroughs so that we can all become better prepared in dealing with natural calamities.

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


DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur


GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "The PAGASA Modernization Act of 2013."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to utilize scientific knowledge and information as an effective instrument to ensure the safety, well-being and economic security of the people; to promote national progress and to contribute to regional socioeconomic development through various applications of meteorology, geophysics and space sciences. Towards this end, the State shall undertake the modernization of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) to elevate its technological and operational capacity to effectively and efficiently perform its mandate.

SECTION 3. *Objectives.* – Pursuant to the foregoing policy, the PAGASA modernization program shall be implemented in accordance with the following objectives:

A. To upgrade physical resources and operational techniques through acquisition of state-of-the-art instruments, equipment and facilities to enhance current capabilities in providing timely and reliable forecasting, warning services for the general public, and information for agriculture, transportation, and other industries across the country;

B. To raise the research and development capability and human resource development, adopting a rationalized and integrated approach, with focus on improvement of operations for specialized services and cost recovery;

C. To develop mechanisms for integrating disaster management and socioeconomic development planning at the national and local levels;

D. To establish regional weather service centers in strategic areas in the country to broaden the agency's bases for delivery of service to the countryside; and

E. To cultivate greater awareness by the public of weather systems, the progress of typhoons, climatic changes, and other related information through the educational projects and programs.

F. To develop a technology-based and financially self-sufficient data center which will serve as the central information station for real time weather updates available to every individual and for the Philippines typhoon preparedness plan.

SECTION 4. *Manpower Training.* – The three (3) year modernization plan shall include a manpower training component that shall include undergraduate and post-graduate degree training sub-components. Scholarships shall be provided for undergraduate and graduate degree trainings. The University of the Philippines Los Banos is mandated, along with the Bicol University, the Central Luzon State University, the Mariano Marcos State University, the Pamantasan ng Maynila, and the Visayas State University to offer an undergraduate degree program in Meteorology within three (3) years from the enactment of this Act. Other state and private universities and colleges may likewise offer a Bachelor of Science in Meteorology.

SECTION 5. *Period of Implementation.* – The modernization program under this Act shall be implemented over a period of three (3) years: *Provided, however,* that payments for amortization of outstanding multi-year contract obligations incurred under this Act may extend beyond this period.

SECTION 6. *Formulation and Submission of PAGASA Modernization Program.* – The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Director of PAGASA, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), shall be responsible for formulating the PAGASA Modernization Program based on the policy objectives provided in this Act.

Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DOST shall submit to the President the PAGASA Modernization Program for final approval.

SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current fiscal year appropriations of the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration. Thereafter, the amount needed for the continued implementation of the modernization program shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

The abovestated amount maybe augmented by grants, bequests, contributions and donations whether local or foreign sources: *Provided*, That, acceptance of grants, bequests, contributions and donations from foreign governments shall be subject to the approval of the President upon the recommendations of the Secretaries of the Department of Science and Technology and Department of Foreign Affairs.

SECTION 8. *Progress Report.* – The Director of PAGASA shall prepare an annual report on the status of the implementation of the PAGASA Modernization Program. The annual report shall be submitted, through the Secretary of the DOST, to the President and to the Chairpersons of the Committees on Science and Technology of the Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION 9. *Cost Recovery Measures.* – The 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, the fees collected shall be deposited as income of the General Fund; *Provided, further, that* no fees shall be charged on the issuance of regular and special reports to the general public that affect national safety, weather, and economy, and such other relevant data.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – 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.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity.* –This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,