

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session
8049
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



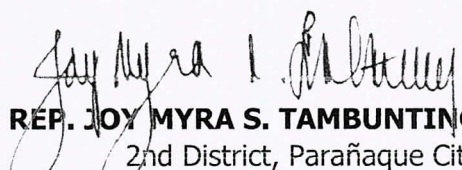
Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure shall require all agencies and local government units to translate to Filipino and any other appropriate regional languages or dialects all their announcements, advisories, press releases, issuances and any other information relevant to a disaster or emergency which are (1) national in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity or State of National Emergency by the President of the Philippines, and (2) provincial, city or municipal in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity or Emergency by a local government unit.

Presently, information released by national agencies concerning calamities and/or disasters are either in English and/or in the Filipino. Whilst there are clear efforts to translate public communications, advisories, and the like to the Filipino language, it would be more helpful if such information are also translated to regional languages and dialects to allow better understanding of pertinent information, and consequently allowing people to prepare better for disasters and emergencies. This measure is proposed to ensure that information is effectively disseminated to people by ensuring that bulletins, advisories, guidelines and the like are translated to regional languages and dialects that are typically used and spoken by our citizens.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.


REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

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HOUSE BILL NO. 8049

Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

AN ACT
MANDATING THE LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY OF DISASTER-RELATED
INFORMATION

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as "Language Accessibility of Public Information on Disasters Act."

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

Section 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as follows:

- a. "Disaster"- a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. Disasters are often described as a result of the combination of: the exposure to a hazard; the conditions of vulnerability that are present; and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative consequences, Disaster impacts may include loss of life, injury, disease and other negative effects on human, physical, mental and social well-being, together with damage to property, destruction of assets, loss of services, Social and economic disruption and environmental degradation;
- b. "Emergency" - unforeseen or sudden occurrence, especially danger, demanding immediate action;
- c. "State of Calamity"- a condition involving mass casualty and/or major damages to property, disruption of means of livelihoods, roads and normal way of life of people in the affected areas as a result of the occurrence of natural or human- induced hazard.

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

Section 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 but not limited to:

- a) Typhoon warnings, 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) and the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs);
- d) Information on epidemics, outbreaks and public health emergencies of the Department of Health (DOH); and
- e) Information on the Social Amelioration Program, emergency assistance and other social protection measures of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);

Section 6. Translation to Filipino and Other Regional Language or Dialect. – The translation of the information covered by this Act shall be to (1) Filipino and (2) other regional language/s or dialect/s, as deemed necessary by the government agency and local government unit concerned considering the geographical location of the affected communities and the intended recipients of the information. The translated information shall be disseminated as widely as possible through all available media and communication channels.

Section 7. Role of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino. – The Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) shall render the necessary technical assistance and expertise to the government agencies and local government units and monitor their compliance to the duties mandated by this Act.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) in consultation with other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

Section 9. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Section 11. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,