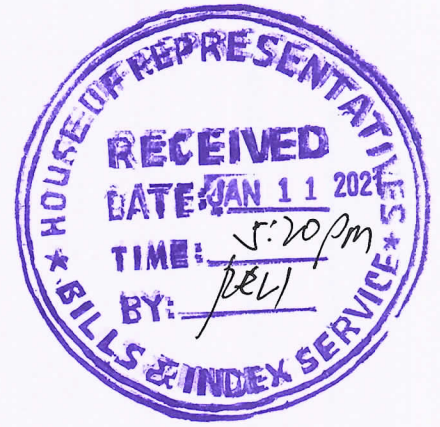


REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

8325
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is frequently exposed to disaster risks such as earthquakes, floods, and typhoons. According to the 2018 World Risk Report, the Philippines ranked third among the countries with the highest risks with an index value of 25.14%.¹ Hence, appropriate information dissemination related to disasters must be implemented to help the public anticipate and prepare for them.

Unfortunately, most of the government's disaster-related information including announcements, advisories, press releases, and issuances are only limited to the Filipino and English language format. This creates a literacy problem for many people with regional language and dialect differences. The language barrier affects the comprehension of such vital information, leaving them vulnerable to disasters.

This bill aims to mandate government agencies and local government units to convert disaster-related information to an easily understandable Filipino format and other appropriate regional dialects. The translated information shall be disseminated

¹ UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. Disaster Risk Reduction in the Philippines. Status Report 2019. Information retrieved from https://www.unisdr.org/files/68265_682308philippinesdrmsstatusreport.pdf

through all available media and communication channels. This measure hopes to foster effective communication in times of disaster that would result in more saved lives.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MDC' with a stylized flourish.

MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

Representative

Magdalo Para Sa Pilipino Party-List

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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HOUSE BILL NO. 8325

Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

AN ACT
MANDATING THE LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY OF DISASTER-RELATED INFORMATION

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.*— This Act shall be known as "Language Accessibility of
2 Public Information on Disasters Act of 2020."

3
4 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*— It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 recognize the right of the people to information on matters of public concern and its
6 vital importance in nation-building. Towards this end, the State shall create and
7 convert disaster-related information to provide regional language and dialect
8 accessibility to the public to equip them the knowledge to anticipate and prepare for
9 disasters.

10
11 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.*— For the purpose of this Act, the following terms
12 shall be applied:

1 (a) *Disaster* refers to any serious occurrence, whether natural or man-made
2 that disrupts the functioning of a community or a society involving
3 widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and
4 impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to
5 cope using its resources;

6 (b) *Emergency* refers to a sudden or unforeseen event or situation, requiring
7 immediate action, which threatens serious damage to human welfare and
8 property;

9 (c) *State of Calamity* refers to a condition involving mass casualty and/or major
10 damages to property, disruption of means of livelihoods, roads, and normal
11 way of life of people in the affected areas as a result of the occurrence of a
12 natural or human-induced hazard.

13
14 Sec. 4. *Scope of Application.*— This Act shall cover disasters and other kinds of
15 emergencies which are (1) national in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity
16 or State of National Emergency by the President of the Philippines and (2) provincial,
17 city, or municipal in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity or Emergency by
18 the appropriate local government unit.

19
20 Sec. 5. *Language Accessibility of Disaster-Related Information.*— In relation to
21 disasters and other emergencies covered by Section 4 of this Act, it shall be mandatory
22 for all government agencies and local government units to convert in an easily
23 understandable form and translate to Filipino and any other appropriate regional
24 language/s or dialect/s all their announcements, advisories, press releases, issuances
25 and any other information relevant to such disaster or emergency, including but not
26 limited to:

27 (a) Typhoon warnings, signals, and other advisories by the Philippine
28 Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAG-
29 ASA);

30 (b) Volcano, earthquake, tsunami, and landslide advisories and bulletins by the
31 Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS);

- 1 (c) Announcements, bulletins, and other advisories of the National Disaster Risk
2 Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Local Disaster Risk
3 Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs);
4 (d) Information on epidemics, outbreaks, and public health emergencies of the
5 Department of Health (DOH); and
6 (e) Information on the Social Amelioration Program, emergency assistance, and
7 other social protection measures of the Department of Social Welfare and
8 Development (DSWD).

9
10 *Sec. 6. Translation to Filipino and Other Regional Language or Dialect.*— The
11 translation of the information covered by this Act shall be to Filipino and other regional
12 languages or dialects, as deemed necessary by the government agency and local
13 government unit concerned considering the geographical location of the affected
14 communities and the intended recipients of the information. The translated
15 information shall be disseminated as widely as possible through all available media
16 and communication channels.

17
18 *Sec. 7. Role of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino.*— The Komisyon sa Wikang
19 Filipino (KWF) shall render the necessary technical assistance and expertise to the
20 government agencies and local government units and monitor their compliance with
21 the duties mandated by this Act.

22
23 *Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.*— Within sixty (60) days from the
24 effectivity of this Act, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), in consultation with
25 other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules
26 and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

27
28 *Sec. 9. Repealing Clause.*— All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
29 proclamations, rules, and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with
30 the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1 Sec. 10. *Separability Clause.*— If any provision or part of this Act, or the
2 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid,
3 the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

4
5 Sec. 11. *Effectivity Clause.*— This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its
6 publication in the Official Gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,