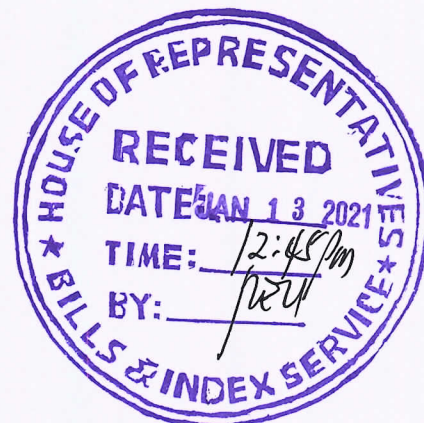


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 8375



Introduced by **HON. ROZZANO RUFINO B. BLAZON**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This piece of legislation seeks to exempt the importation of critical medical products, essential goods, equipment and supplies to address public health emergencies from import duties, taxes and other fees. It is a crucial proposal intended to fill a policy gap on how the country responds to such emergencies.

The country must always be prepared to deal with situations that threaten the health and endanger the lives of our people. Government must, at all times, be ready to respond to public health emergencies effectively and efficiently to cushion their effects and prevent them from becoming disasters. The country must therefore have the capacity to act swiftly and decisively during public health emergencies as time is of the essence in dealing with the lives of people.

It is therefore a primordial concern that we must have the wherewithal to address public health emergencies such as critical medical products, essential goods, equipment and supplies. Some of these may have to be imported into the country and any impediment therefore that may affect their availability and accessibility to our people, such as import duties, taxes and other fees, must be waived. Government must willingly give up these revenue sources as it will redound to more lives saved.

For the foregoing reasons, the urgent passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ROZZANO RUFINO B. BLAZON
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 8375

Introduced by **HON. ROZZANO RUFINO B. BIAZON**

AN ACT
EXEMPTING THE IMPORTATION OF CRITICAL MEDICAL PRODUCTS,
ESSENTIAL GOODS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES TO ADDRESS PUBLIC
HEALTH EMERGENCIES FROM IMPORT DUTIES, TAXES AND OTHER FEES

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

SECTION 1. – *Short Title.* – This Act shall be referred to as the “*Public Health Emergency Importation Tax Exemption Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to ensure and protect the health and safety of the people. The State shall continuously adopt mechanisms that would enhance its capacity to address threats to the health security of its citizenry. Toward this end, it shall minimize barriers that impede the State’s capacity to efficiently and effectively cope with public health emergencies.

SEC. 3. *Exemption from Duties, Taxes and Other Fees.* – The importation of critical medical products, essential goods, equipment and supplies shall be exempted from import duties, taxes and other fees: *Provided*, That such exemption shall only be granted upon the declaration of a public health emergency: *Provided, further*, That such exemption shall only apply to importations for the duration of the public health emergency.

For this purpose, critical medical products, essential goods, equipment and supplies shall include the following:

- (a) Critical medical products include Vaccines and other necessary medicines to contain the public health emergency;
- (b) Essential goods, may include personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns, masks, goggles, and face shields; surgical equipment and supplies; laboratory equipment and its reagents; medical equipment and devices; support and maintenance for laboratory and medical equipment, surgical equipment and supplies; medical supplies, tools, and consumables such as alcohol, sanitizers, tissue, thermometers, hand soap, detergent, sodium hypochlorite, cleaning materials, povidone iodine; testing kits, and such other supplies or equipment as may be determined by the Department of Health (DOH) and other relevant government agencies;
- (c) Equipment for waste management, including but not limited to, waste segregation, storage, collection, sorting, treatment and disposal services: *Provided*, That these said

equipment and technologies and services are approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DOH or other concerned regulatory agencies;

- (d) Inputs, raw materials and equipment necessary for the manufacture or production of essential goods referred to in Paragraph One (1) hereof related to the containment or mitigation of the public health emergency: *Provided*, That for the purpose of qualifying for exemption from import duties, taxes and other fees and ensuring supply of PPE at competitive prices, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall certify that the equipment and supplies being imported are not locally available or of insufficient quality and preference; *Provided, further*, That preference is given to products, materials and supplies produced, made or manufactured in the Philippines.

SEC. 4. *Liberalization of Importation Procedures.* – The Bureau of Customs (BoC), in coordination with other concerned agencies, is hereby mandated to formulate liberalized procedures to expedite the entry of critical medical products, essential goods, equipment and supplies to address public health emergencies in our country.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Finance, in cooperation with the Department of Health and other concerned departments and agencies of the government, shall come up with the implementing rules and regulations for this Act fifteen (15) days upon its effectivity.

SEC 6. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision or part hereof is declared invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,