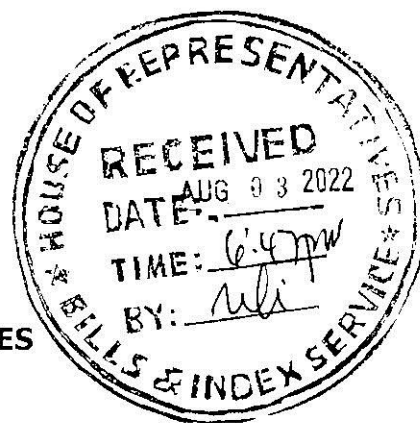


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. B. No. 3187

Introduced by Representative Ralph G. Recto

AN ACT

MANDATING THE ANNUAL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ALL CONTINGENT LIABILITIES INCURRED BY ALL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR -CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS, GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Government is mandated by no less than the 1987 Constitution to recognize the role of the private sector in providing adequate social services, promoting full employment, raising the standard of living, and improving the quality of life for all Filipinos.

Encouraging the private sector to participate in the delivery of public services, however, is hampered by the country's market realities marked by stringent regulations, uncertain socio-economic and political environment, and market distortions caused by price control and subsidies.

To tap private sector capital and skills, the government was compelled to make public sector investments more profitable by providing incentives, including assuming investment risks. As such, the conferment of government guarantees on public sector investment and borrowings became one of the prominent features of Republic Act No. 6957 as amended, otherwise known as the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law.

The benefits of government guarantees, however, come at a price. Studies conducted by the University of the Philippines School of Economics showed that government risk management practices severely understate the level of exposure and risk arising from unfettered provision of guarantees. Philippine Institute for Development Studies and the Development Budget Coordinating Committee raised their concerns over the unexpected public sector obligations that could be brought

about by government guarantees, especially on the delivery of public goods and services.

The Senate Economic Planning Office underscored the importance of effective identification, management, and reporting of contingent liabilities and off-budget risks of government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs), since past fiscal crises in the Philippines were triggered by extra-budgetary activities. Considering the potential of government guarantees to wreak havoc on public resources, the conferment and management of such guarantees require exacting deliberations and wide-ranging public disclosures.

The mechanisms to enable the public and the policymaker to make informed decisions on public debt, however, remained largely inadequate.

The Commission on Audit has already recommended the disclosure of relevant information pertaining to the contingent liabilities including the fiscal risks associated with guarantees on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects and on issuances of GOCCs and government financial institutions (GFIs) in its Public Debt Management Audit for 2004 and 2009-2010. In 2015, the Commission reiterated this position when it identified the non-disclosure of over one trillion pesos contingent liabilities arising from government guarantees on PPP projects and liabilities from GOCCs and GFIs.

This bill requires the annual public disclosure of government's contingent liabilities at least a month prior to the submission of the President's annual budget to Congress. It will provide Members of Congress and other stakeholders with a better appreciation of the fiscal and monetary impact of the government's contingent liabilities on future government spending. At the end of the day, prudent fiscal management warrants the establishment of a stronger legal and institutional framework in apprising the public about the obligations and risks involved in public-private partnership in public service delivery.

It is in this light that the swift approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



RALPH G. RECTO

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Contingent Liabilities
2 Disclosure Act.”

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy and Objectives.* – It is the declared policy of the
4 State to recognize the right of the people to information on matters of public concern.
5 The Philippine Government shall be transparent in all of its financial transactions and
6 decisions and as such, shall afford the citizens access to official records, documents
7 and research data that pertains to, or used as basis for, the country’s fiscal and
8 monetary policy.

9 Sec. 3. *Contingent Liabilities.* – Contingent liabilities shall refer to explicit
10 guarantees extended by the Philippine Government through any of its agencies
11 including local government units, government-owned or -controlled corporations
12 (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) including, but not limited to, the
13 following:

14 (a) Guarantees arising from Republic Act No. 6957, as amended by Republic
15 Act No. 7718;

1 (b) Loans contracted and liabilities incurred by GOCCs or by GFIs which were
2 guaranteed by the National Government;

3 (c) Guarantee programs implemented by GOCCs and GFIs;

4 (d) GFI-guaranteed private loans which were subsequently transferred to and
5 assumed by the National Government by virtue of Proclamation No. 50, Administrative
6 Order No. 64 s.1988, and other similar statutes or issuances;

7 (e) Government insurance programs; and

8 (f) Other potential losses arising from indemnities, pending litigation, and
9 other circumstances relating to claims and assessments in respect of breach of
10 contract, damages to persons and property, and similar items.

11 *Sec. 4. Full Disclosure of Contingent Liabilities.* – The Department of Finance
12 (DOF) is hereby mandated to implement full disclosure of all contingent liabilities of
13 the National Government or any of its agencies including GOCCs and GFIs in an annual
14 basis. All information related to the government contingent liabilities shall be contained
15 in an annual report to be submitted to the Chairpersons of the Senate Committee on
16 Finance and House Committee on Appropriations no later than June 30 of the
17 succeeding year.

18 *Sec. 5. Content and Publication of the Contingent Liability Report.* – The report
19 shall indicate, among others, the specific contingent liabilities of government, the
20 amount involved therein, the purpose and scope of such liabilities, its duration and
21 conditions, and its intended beneficiaries. Information related to the government
22 contingent liabilities shall also be published in at least two (2) newspapers of national
23 circulation and/or in the official websites of the government agencies concerned at
24 least one (1) month prior to the submission of the President's annual budget to
25 Congress.

26 *Sec. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from
27 effectivity of this Act, the DOF and the National Economic and Development Authority
28 (NEDA) shall, in consultation with other relevant government agencies, promulgate
29 the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

30 *Sec. 7. Separability Clause.* – If any provision, section or part of this Act shall
31 be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, invalidate or
32 impair any other provisions, sections or parts hereof.

1 Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations
2 which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended
3 or modified accordingly.

4 Sec. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
5 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official*
6 *Gazette.*

 Approved,