



Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 7182**



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Introduced by Representative **Geraldine B. Roman**

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#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Given that the issue of climate change causes powerful and destructive tropical storms, heavy rains, floods, and landslides, it has been predicted that the nation will suffer the worst effects as long as the issue is not resolved. The Philippines, which is ranked 115th out of 182 nations in the most recent Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative report, is one of the nations most at risk from the effects of climate change.

It is emphasized that utility services are fundamental and essential public goods that will assist affected people and households in gaining their lives back to normal and in seeking new employment and earnings.

Utility services such as electric power, water, telecommunications, and Internet services are momentarily interrupted as the nation suffers the negative effects of natural catastrophes. These catastrophes cause damage to cables, pipelines, towers, and wires, which causes disconnection of essential public services

For people making minimum wage and blue-collar workers in particular, these disruptions may temporarily impair their ability to meet their monthly and daily obligations, which may result in delays. Some people may not be able to timely meet their obligations for utilities, medical expenses, rental payments, etc. while a disaster or emergency is occurring. The government must make sure that the underprivileged, defenseless, and disadvantaged segments of our society are given sufficient protection and assistance during these trying times.

The public interest necessitates that all Filipinos receive utility services that are of a high standard, reliable, secure, and affordable, as well as transparent and reasonable costs in an environment of open and inclusive competition. In order to prioritize their needs for food, clothing, and a place to live, the State must provide relief to the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies. Because of their limited budgets, paying for utility services will be an encumbrance for them in the short term.

The bill aims to put in place a moratorium on payments for basic utility services during and post disaster and other emergencies.

Immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

  
**GERALDINE B. ROMAN**  
Representative  
1<sup>st</sup> District, Bataan



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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR AN EXEMPTION ON PAYMENTS FOR BASIC UTILITY SERVICES**  
**DURING DISASTERS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES AND GRANTING THE RIGHT**  
**TO AVAIL A ONE-YEAR LIFELINE FOR ALL UNEMPLOYED AND INDIVIDUALS**  
**WHO LOST THEIR SOURCE OF INCOME DUE TO DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES**

*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 the “Kaluwagan sa Kalamidad (K<sup>2</sup>) Act.”

**SEC 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to ensure the quality, reliability, availability and affordability of basic utility services in times of disasters and other emergencies.

**SEC 3. *Definition of Terms.*** As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- (a) *Basic Utility Services* are utility services such as the: electric power services, internet services, telecommunications services, and water utility services.
- (b) *Disasters and Other Emergencies* shall be defined in accordance with Section 3 (h) and (r) of Republic Act No. 10121, otherwise known as “Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010.”
- (c) *Electrical Power Services* are services related to electrical distribution provided by a power distribution company or an electric cooperative.
- (d) *Internet Services* are services related to Internet connectivity provided by Internet Service Providers (ISPs).
- (e) *Residential Consumers* are *bona fide* consumers within the affected areas of a disaster who requires basic utility services.
- (f) *Telecommunications Services* are services related to mobile and landline telecommunications provided by a telecommunication company.
- (g) *Water Utility Services* are services related to the distribution of water for domestic use provided by water concessionaires and local water districts.

**SEC 4. *Coverage.*** This Act shall cover the following basic utility services as defined under Section 3 hereof, Electrical Power Services; Water Utility Services; Telecommunication Services (i.e., Mobile Postpaid and Landline Telephone); and Internet Services.

**SEC 5. *Eligibility.*** All residential consumers in the municipality, city, province, region or disaster-affected areas, as duly defined in the declaration of state of calamity, shall be eligible to the provisions of this Act.

**SEC 6. *Declaration of State of Calamity.*** The declaration of a State of Calamity shall comply with Section 16 of Republic Act 10121, also known as the "Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010:" *Provided, That* the declaration shall state the moratorium on utility service payments throughout the affected areas in accordance with this Act.

**SEC 7. *Exemption on Utility Services Payments.*** For the duration of the State of Calamity declared by the President, and for sixty (60) days after the termination of said State of Calamity, or until such time that the basic utility services are restored, there shall be a waiver in the enforcement of payment of all fees, charges, and costs for the basic utility services as mentioned in Section 4 of this Act. Furthermore, fees, charges, and costs for basic utility services shall not be subject to penalties or interest assessments during the period of emergencies and calamities.

**SEC 8. *Right to Avail One-year Lifeline.*** A person who is unemployed or has lost their source of income shall be exempt from paying any fees, costs, charges and interests for the basic utility services mentioned in Section 4 of this Act for a period of twelve (12) months, which is equal to one (1) year: *Provided, That* power distribution companies, electric cooperatives, water concessionaires, and local water districts shall grant a one-year lifeline to all residential customers who consume 100 kWh or less per month and/or 10 cubic meters of water per month until they find stable employment and a source of income: *Provided further,* fees, charges, and costs for basic utility services shall not be subject to penalties or interest assessments in the period provided hereof.

**SEC 9. *Penalty.*** Basic Utility Service providers, franchise holders and concessionaires found in violation of this law shall be subject to a fine of not more than Five Million Pesos (P5,000,000.00) per infraction.

**SEC 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the following government agencies shall issue necessary implementing rules and regulation (IRR):

- (a) Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and Local Water Utilities Administration for the IRR of Water Utility Services;
- (b) National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) for the IRR of Telecommunications and Internet Services; and
- (c) Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) and the National Electrification Administration (NEA) for the Electrical Power Services.

**SEC 11. *Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act or the application thereof is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions.

**SEC 12. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, parts of laws, decrees, orders, letters of instructions and ordinances, or regulations in conflict with the provisions hereof, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC 13. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*