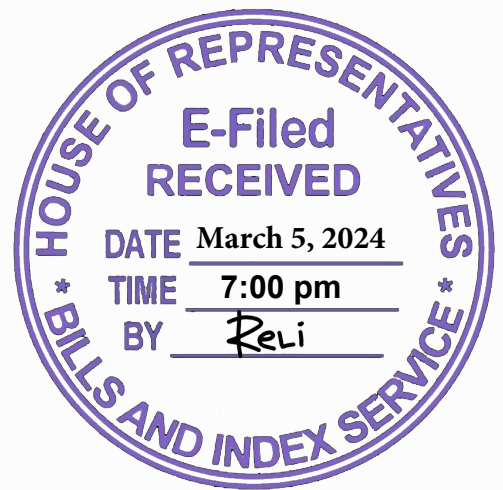


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **10047**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE DISSEMINATION OF FALSE INFORMATION ON BOMB
THREATS, EXPLOSIVES, OR ANY OTHER LIFE-THREATENING OR
DESTRUCTIVE MATERIALS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

During the past months several bomb threats has been experienced throughout the country mostly done in schools, universities and in several government agencies. The latest was just this February wherein a threat was sent through email and text messaging which disrupted classes and work operations in Bataan, Zambales, and Metro Manila.¹ According to newspaper reports, similar bomb threats last September and October last year on government establishments was done by the same offender.²

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has reported that recent threats have extended beyond our borders, affecting neighboring countries as well. Investigations have revealed that these incidents originated from a Japanese Lawyer named Takahiro Karasawa who utilized electronic mail to disseminate the threats.³

Utilizing the internet for disseminating bomb threats is not unprecedented. In a similar incident in 2018, reports indicated that a flight attendant purportedly posed as a member of the terror Abu Sayyaf Group and sent bomb threats to multiple airline companies via electronic mail.⁴

¹ Argosino, F. (2024, February 15). *PNP: At least 80 bomb threat reports received last Monday*. INQUIRER.net. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1904425/fwd-pnp-on-receiving-80-to-90-bomb-threats-on-february-12>

² Emmanuel Tupas, M. E. V. (2024, February 12). *Bomb threats hit Metro Manila, Luzon Offices, schools*. Philstar.com. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/02/13/2332960/bomb-threats-hit-metro-manila-luzon-offices-schools>

³ PNP-PIO. (2024, February 15). *PNP statement on hoax Bomb Threats*. Philippine National Police. <https://pnp.gov.ph/pnp-statement-on-hoax-bomb-threats>

⁴ Sadongdong, M. (2018, August 25). *Flight attendant nabbed over Bomb Threat » Manila bulletin news*. Manila Bulletin. <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/08/24/flight-attendant-nabbed-over-bomb-threat/>

This proposed measure seeks to give stricter penalty and thorough process of apprehension to any person who will make and/or disseminate false information on bomb threats.

False bomb threats not only induce panic but also divert crucial resources away from genuine emergencies. It likewise disrupt normalcy in society, causing inconvenience and operational losses to business, schools, transportation systems, and government agencies. By imposing strict penalties on individuals or groups responsible for disseminating false information under this proposed legislation, we can minimize or eradicate the "mindset of people who are taking these matters lightly through pranks and jokes". We want to instill to the public the seriousness of the matter and that the utmost safety of people's lives and their properties are safeguarded and protected from significant harm.

In addition, responding to bomb threats requires significant financial and human resources, law enforcement agencies, emergency response teams, and other authorities invest substantial time, effort, and money in investigating and managing these threats, the enactment of this Act will conserve these resources for genuine emergencies and calamities.

Despite the enactment of the Presidential Decree No. 1727, entitled "Declaring as Unlawful the Malicious Dissemination of False information or the Willful Making of any Threat Concerning Bombs, Explosives or Any Similar Device or Means of Destruction and Imposing Penalties Therefor", signed on October 1980, there has been a persistent occurrence of malicious threats all around the country, which in recent months have been done through the use of digital platforms.

Without a stricter law addressing the false bomb threats, perpetrators may easily escape accountability. This will establish legal standards and repercussions for those who engage in such malicious and dangerous behaviors.

Advocating for the enactment of an Anti- False Bomb Threat Law is crucial for safeguarding public safety, preventing disruption, conserving resources, ensuring legal accountability and deterring future offenses. This Act will serve as a vital tool in maintaining order and protecting communities from the harmful consequences of false bomb threats.



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DESTRUCTIVE MATERIALS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

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

1
2 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Anti-Bomb Joke Act.”

3
4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – The State is committed to safeguarding its citizens from
5 the dissemination of false information pertaining to bomb threats, explosives, and other life-
6 threatening or destructive materials that pose risks to life and property. This policy underscores
7 the imperative of undertaking comprehensive measures to mitigate the harmful impact of such
8 misinformation and threats on public safety and well-being.

9
10 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act:

- 11 a. Bomb refers to a container filled with explosive, incendiary material, smoke, gas, or
12 other destructive substance, designed to explode. It can appear obvious or concealed
13 and can vary in size, shape or sophistication and may not necessarily explode such as
14 in the case of incendiary and dirty bombs or other such devices. It may be referred to
15 as Improvised Explosive Device (IED) or ordinance;
- 16 b. Explosive refers to any material that causes a sudden, almost instantaneous, release of
17 gas, heat, and pressure, accompanied by a loud noise when subjected to a certain
18 amount of shock pressure, or temperature;
- 19 c. High density areas refer to areas which are regularly populated with people, including
20 public spaces like public parks, airports, seaports, hotels, and malls, or where people
21 are gathered for an event;
- 22 d. Incendiary device refers to a weapon designed to start fires or destroy sensitive
23 equipment using fire that uses materials such as napalm, thermite, magnesium posser,
24 chlorine trifluoride, or white phosphorus;

- 1 e. Life-threatening or destructive material refers to any matter or substance that is
2 capable of causing death, including an explosive; incendiary device; poison gas;
3 mine; grenade; a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces; a
4 missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce; any
5 type of weapon, other than a shotgun or shotgun shell, by whatever name known
6 which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of
7 an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than
8 one-half inch in diameter; or any combination of parts either designed or intended for
9 use in converting any device into a destructive device described above and from
10 which a destructive device may be readily assembled; and,
11 f. Sensitive areas refer to those which are subject to high-risk upon violation of this Act
12 because of the magnitude of the resulting consequences such as possible losses in
13 productivity, resources, and religious value, notwithstanding the number of people
14 present therein, including educational institutions, offices, government institutions,
15 hospitals, and churches and other places of worship.
16

17 **SEC. 4. Prohibition.** – Any person who, by word of mouth or through the use of mail,
18 electronic mail, telephone, cellular phone, fax machine, telegraph, printed materials, video
19 recording, social media, and other instrument or means of communication, makes any threat or
20 conveys, communicates, transmits, imparts, passes on, or otherwise disseminates false
21 information, knowing the same to be false, concerning an attempt or alleged attempt being made
22 to kill, injure, or intimidate any individual or group or to unlawfully damage or destroy any
23 building, vehicle, or other real or personal property, by means of explosives, incendiary devices,
24 and other destructive forces of similar nature or characteristics, shall be penalized as prescribed
25 in Section 6 hereof.
26

27 **SEC. 5. Apprehension.** – Perpetrators shall be apprehended immediately by the security or
28 authorized personnel of the affected establishments who initially responded to the incident or
29 who were physically present at the commission of the prohibited acts in Section 4 of this Act.
30

31 The authorized persons of these establishments shall exercise due diligence and care not to
32 create any further commotion, threat to lives and damage to property. They shall subsequently
33 report and turn over to the local police authorities the apprehended persons for further
34 investigation and the filing of appropriate legal actions pursued against these individuals or
35 group of violators in accordance with this Act: or
36

37 The commission of the crimes under this Act usually transpire in highly populated
38 locations and establishments where damage will be of substantial impact and timeliness of the
39 apprehension is a necessary precaution to avoid significant outcomes. The court rule on issuance
40 of Arrest, Search and Seizure Order (ASSO) under this Act will not apply. However,

1 apprehending persons, arresting or investigating police officers and other authorized government
2 authorities shall exercise due process in handling these alleged perpetrators.

3
4 The perpetrator will not be eligible for bail pending trial by the Metropolitan Trial Courts,
5 Municipal Trial Courts, and Municipal Circuit Trial Courts.

6 **SEC. 6. Penalties.** – (a) Any person who violates this Act shall be subject to imprisonment
7 of not more than two (2) years or a fine not exceeding One hundred thousand pesos
8 (P100,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction over the offense herein
9 defined and penalized;

10 (b) If the violation of this Act is directed at high density areas or sensitive areas and causes
11 the evacuation of a dwelling, building, place of assembly, facility, including public
12 transportation, aircraft, ship, and other common carriers, or the stoppage, cancellation or
13 disruption of any kind of service to the public, or results to death or deaths in relation to the
14 chaos created herein, or losses in productivity and resources, the penalty shall be imprisonment
15 of not more than six (6) years or a fine not exceeding Five million pesos (P5,000,000.00), or
16 both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction over the offense herein defined and
17 penalized.

18 The foregoing penalties shall be imposed without prejudice to other liabilities under the
19 Revised Penal Code or any special law, arising out of, or on occasion of the herein prohibited
20 act.

21
22 **SEC. 7. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
23 unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

24
25 **SEC. 8. Repealing Clause.** – Presidential Decree No. 1727, otherwise known as “Declaring
26 as Unlawful the Malicious Dissemination of False Information of the Willful Making of Any
27 Threat Concerning Bombs, Explosive or Any Similar Device or Means of Destruction and
28 Imposing Penalties Therefor”, is hereby repealed. All other laws, executive orders,
29 proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to this Act are
30 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

31
32 **SEC. 9. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
33 Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

34
35 Approved.