



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

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE BILL NO. 350



**Introduced by Representative
ZIAUR-RAHMAN "ZIA" ALONTO ADIONG**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine government has long recognized the importance of providing immediate and efficient assistance during times of disaster. In this regard, the "Free Freight Services for Relief Goods Act" seeks to support the transportation of relief goods to areas affected by calamities. This bill aims to provide free freight services for the movement of emergency relief goods to calamity-stricken regions, thereby ensuring that help reaches those in need in the most timely and efficient manner. By involving both public and private logistics companies, the bill promotes collaboration in alleviating the burdens faced by disaster victims.

The bill's policy is founded on the need to strengthen the state's quick response mechanisms and encourage public and private sector participation in disaster relief efforts. It allows registered relief organizations to benefit from free freight services, ensuring that critical supplies such as food, clothing, and medical goods can be delivered to affected areas. By waiving port and airport charges, the bill also reduces logistical costs, allowing more resources to be allocated directly to the relief efforts. Additionally, it encourages private logistics companies to participate by offering them tax incentives, thus ensuring continued engagement from key stakeholders in the transportation industry.

The bill emphasizes the importance of oversight in the distribution and movement of relief goods. The National and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Councils, in partnership with law enforcement agencies, will ensure that relief efforts are carried out effectively. With clear guidelines for monitoring and compliance, the bill ensures that the necessary resources and infrastructure are in place to support disaster response operations. By doing so, it helps minimize delays in delivering aid to affected communities, ultimately fostering a more coordinated and organized approach to disaster relief.

By providing free freight services and tax incentives to logistics companies, the bill reduces logistical barriers that often delay the transportation of vital supplies. The bill ensures that relief goods are delivered quickly to those in need while promoting cooperation between government agencies and private sector entities. This is an important step in strengthening the country's disaster response system, ultimately benefiting communities affected by calamities.

The same bill was successfully passed on third reading by the House of Representatives during the Nineteenth Congress, underscoring the broad support for its provisions.

In light of the above, the immediate approval of this bill is respectfully requested.



REP. ZIAUR-RAHMAN ALONTO ADIONG
1st District, Lanao del Sur



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**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE FREIGHT SERVICES IN THE TRANSPORTATION
OF RELIEF GOODS TO CALAMITY-STRICKEN AREAS**

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 “Free Transportation Act
Relief Goods Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to strengthen the existing quick response mechanisms to address the needs of the people during disasters and emergencies. To this end, the State shall encourage altruism among the citizens and engage the services of public and private common carriers, freight forwarders, freight companies, and other logistics companies to collect, sort, store, transport, and deliver relief goods donated by international and local donors to areas declared in a “state of calamity” in the most economical, reliable, speedy, and secure manner.

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

(a) **Arrastre** refers to the fee for handling and hauling cargo at the port. It covers the cost of unloading cargo from ships, moving it within the port area, and loading it onto trucks or other means of transportation for further delivery;

(b) **Common carriers** refer to persons, corporations, firms, or associations engaged in the business of carrying or transporting passengers or goods, or both, by land, water, or air, for compensation, offering their services to the public;

(c) **Disaster** refers to a severe disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses and impacts,

which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources;

(d) **Pilotage** refers to the services provided by the marine pilot, who is an experienced ship captain with in-depth knowledge of a specific port, harbor, or navigable waterway;

(e) **Relief** refers to interventions to alleviate, ease, or mitigate a distressed or critical situation affecting persons, families, groups or communities;

(f) **Relief goods** refer to food packs and non-food items such as clothing articles, mats, blankets, mosquito nets, kitchen wares, water containers, hygiene kits, and medical and health-related products to be given directly to the victims of a disaster or an emergency;

(g) **State of calamity** refers to a condition involving mass casualties or major damages to property and infrastructures such as roads, disruption of means of livelihood, and the normal way of life of people in the affected areas due to a natural or human-induced hazard.

SEC. 4. Free Freight Services. – The National and Regional Logistics Cluster led by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and partnership with the Philippine Postal Corporation (PPC), freight companies, common carriers, private carriers, freight forwarders, and other companies providing logistic services in the Philippines shall provide free freight services to duly registered relief organizations in the transportation of emergency relief goods and donated articles to areas declared to be in a state of calamity by the President of the Philippines or by a local government unit (LGU) through its Sanggunian. When the area of destination is not accessible, the relief goods shall be delivered and consigned to the local chief executive of the nearest LGU.

The areas where these entities operate shall be considered when availing of the free freight services of common carriers, private carriers, freight forwarders, and other logistics companies. The shipping auxiliary cost, such as those for arrastre services, pilotage, and other port charges, as well as the airport charges, such as those for landing and takeoff fees, aircraft parking, navigation charges, and other related airport charges that are routinely passed on to customers, shall be waived by the concerned port and airport authorities: Provided, That container van costs, turnaround time, and volume of cargo being shipped free of charge shall be considered to minimize the loss of profits for the private sector.

SEC. 5. Vigilance over Relief Goods. – The National and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Councils, through their Response Clusters, shall facilitate the speedy movement of people, goods, and equipment to the affected population and responding agencies in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, port authorities, and organizations with similar mandates and responsibilities.

SEC. 6. Release of Relief Goods. – The release of donated relief goods and articles intended for distribution to areas under a state of calamity shall comply with the existing rules and procedures of responsible government agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Bureau of Customs (BOC), Department of Education, Department of Health, LGUs, and other government agencies authorized to distribute the relief goods and articles, and in consideration of prevailing policies of freight service and logistics companies and carriers.

SEC. 7. Tax Deduction. – Common carriers, private carriers, and other logistics companies mandated to provide free freight services for the transportation of relief goods under Section 4 of this Act shall be entitled to one hundred percent (100%) additional deduction from gross income of the amount of the cost incurred for the service provided, including the actual cost of salaries and allowances of personnel directly involved in transporting the relief goods, subject to the rules and limitations prescribed under the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended, existing laws, rules and regulations: Provided, That to avail of the additional deduction, common carriers, private carriers, and other logistics companies shall secure proper certification from the appropriate government agency that the expenses claimed as deduction relate specifically to the services for the transportation of relief goods as contemplated in this Act. This availment, however, is without prejudice to the conduct of post-audit by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The availment of the tax incentives shall bar the concerned common carriers and other logistics companies' availment of any similar incentives granted by other general or special laws, rules, or regulations for such freight services.

SEC. 8. Oversight Agencies. – The OCD and the DOTr, through the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), shall monitor and oversee the compliance of freight service companies, common and private carriers, and other logistics companies in providing free freight services as provided under Section 4 of this Act.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Administrator of OCD shall, in coordination with the heads of CAB, MARINA, LTFRB, BOC, PPC, DSWD, Philippine Ports Authority, Philippine Coast Guard, and the association or authorized representatives of freight service companies and freight forwarders, common and private carriers, and other companies offering logistics services in the country, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 11. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,