

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

20th Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **667**



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE EMIGDIO P. TANJUATCO III**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

“Access to water, sanitation and hygiene is a human right.” This is the rationale posed by the United Nations when it included ‘Clean Water and Sanitation’ among its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030. In the latest report of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) pursuant to accomplishing this goal, less than half or only about 48% of the Filipino population has access to safely-managed drinking water in 2022. That means approximately 60million Filipinos without access to potable/drinking water.

This bill seeks the provision of potable water across the country and mandating the appropriation of the necessary funds for the construction of water supply systems that will benefit the unserved sector of our population. It aims to be an expanded implementation of the Sagana at Ligtas na Tubig Para sa Lahat (SALINTUBIG) program of Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

With the health of millions of Filipino households depending on this bill for immediate access to safe drinking water, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



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AN ACT
MANDATING THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO ALLOCATE FUNDS FOR POTABLE
WATER ACCESS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF WATER SYSTEMS IN ALL BARANGAYS,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Potable Water Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of State Policy.* It is the declared policy of the State to provide one of man’s basic right and need—the right to access to potable water. It is also the policy of the State to promote the quality of health of every Filipino through the provision of adequate potable water supply system. To this end, the State shall ensure access of every Filipino to potable water through the funding, and the construction of, water systems across the country—giving priority to the poorest barangays.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* As used in this Act, the term:

- a. *Water Systems/Water Facilities* – refers to a water supply system in one or more provincial cities or municipalities.
- b. *Water District* – refers to a water district is a local corporate entity that operates and maintains a water supply system in one or more provincial cities or municipalities.
- c. *Potable Water* – refers to drinking water; is water that is safe to drink or to use for food preparation.

SEC. 4. *Scope.* This Act shall cover all local government units (LGUs). The necessary water systems and water facilities shall be established, constructed and implemented on a per-area or region basis which would be most strategic to cater to all barangays as determined by the Department of Health (DOH), Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and such other agencies that have data and studies on the matter.

Any existing water system or facilities project shall be enhanced by the national government through the above-mentioned government agencies and GOCCs in compliance with the mandate of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Allocation from the national government.* The government, through the DOH, LWUA, DPWH, and such other agencies that have the authority to plot where to implement the objectives of this Act, develop the necessary studies to ascertain key areas that are in need of potable water, and implement the project necessary for the construction of water systems/facilities within the territory of the Republic of the Philippines, shall henceforth include in its budget an allocation for such study, construction and completion of such water systems and/or facilities.

In the implementation of this Act, the poorest local government units and barangays shall have the highest priority. The socio-economic status of said local government units shall be determined using data from the appropriate government agencies such as the Philippine Statistics

Authority (PSA), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and National Economic Development Authority (NEDA).

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to remove, reduce, diminish or otherwise abandon the present responsibility and commitment of local government units to fund and/or spearhead the construction and completion of their own water systems using their share from the IRA due them and other sources of revenues.

SEC. 6. *Appropriation.* The funds required for the implementation of this Act upon its approval shall be taken from the budget of the LWUA and DPWH for the current fiscal year.

Thereafter, the amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year immediately following its enactment into law and subsequent thereto. The LWUA, as a government-owned and controlled corporation, shall be required to allocate from its revenue a separate budget to comply with the requirements of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the LWUA, DPWH, PSA, NAPC, NEDA and such other concerned agencies, shall adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act. Such implementing rules and regulations shall be effective fifteen (15) days following their publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) major newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, proclamations, rules, regulations, issuances and enactments or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,