



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 950



Introduced by Representative Crispin Diego “Ping” D. Remulla

**AN ACT
TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF BEACHES AND
COASTAL RECREATION WATER**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines boasts an extensive coastline and world-renowned beaches, which play a vital role in attracting both local and international tourists. These coastal areas are not only a source of national pride but also a key driver of economic activity. In 2023, tourism provided jobs for approximately 6.21 million Filipinos, accounting for 12.9% of the country’s total employment, the highest recorded contribution in 24 years, based on data from the Philippine Statistics Authority.

Despite this economic importance, our beaches and coastal waters face growing environmental threats, particularly from plastic pollution. A 2023 monitoring survey in Manila Bay found that plastics made up 90% of all litter. The Philippines has also been identified among the top contributors to global marine plastic pollution. According to estimates, between 0.28 and 0.75 million tonnes of plastic waste enter the ocean each year from coastal areas surrounding Manila Bay alone.

This proposed measure aims to address environmental challenges in coastal areas by enhancing waste management systems. This also seeks to protect our natural resources, preserve the beauty of our beaches, and ensure the continued viability of the tourism sector.

Beyond environmental protection, the bill supports long-term economic stability and aligns with global goals on sustainable development. By protecting our coastal ecosystems today, we help secure the livelihoods of millions of tourism workers and preserve these natural assets for future generations to come.

In view of the urgency and importance of safeguarding both the environment and the economy, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Remulla', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CRISPIN DIEGO "PING" D. REMULLA



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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the Beaches Environmental
2 Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act.

3 **SEC. 2. Purposes.** – The purpose of this Act is to require uniform criteria and
4 procedures for testing, monitoring, and notifying users of public coastal recreation water and
5 beaches:

- 6 (a) To protect public safety; and
7 (b) To improve environmental quality.

8 **SEC. 3. Definitions.** – For the purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

9 (a) Coastal recreation water means water adjacent to public beaches and marine coastal
10 water (including bays, lagoon mouths, and coastal estuaries within the tidal zone)
11 used by the public for:

- 12 i. Swimming;
13 ii. Bathing;
14 iii. Surfing; or
15 iv. Other similar body contact purposes.

16 (b) Floatable materials means any foreign matter that may float or remain suspending
17 in water, including:

- i. Plastic;
- ii. Aluminum cans;
- iii. Wood;
- iv. Bottles;
- v. Paper products; and
- vi. Fishing gear.

SEC. 4. Adoption of Coastal Recreational Water Quality Criteria. –

(a) In General. – Not later than three (3) years and one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall adopt water quality criteria for coastal recreation water.

(b) Development of Criteria. – Water quality criteria described in paragraph (a) shall be developed and promulgated, in accordance with existing environmental laws and policies.

SEC. 5. Water Quality Criteria Revision. –

(a) Studies. – Not later than three (3) years after the date of enactment of this Act, and after consultation with appropriate officials, including local health officials, and other interested persons, the Secretary shall conduct studies to provide new information for use in developing:

- i. A more complete list of potential human health risks from inhalation, ingestion, or body contact with coastal recreation water, including effects on the upper respiratory system;
- ii. Appropriate and effective indicators for improving direct detection of the presence of pathogens found harmful to human health in coastal recreational water;
- iii. Appropriate, accurate, and expeditious methods (including predictive models) for detecting the presence of pathogens in coastal recreation water that are harmful to human health; and
- iv. Guidance for the application of the criteria issues under subsection (b) to account for the diversity of geographic and aquatic conditions throughout the country.

(b) Revised Criteria. – not later than five (5) years after the date of enactment of this Act, based on the results of the studies conducted under paragraph (a), the Secretary,

1 after consultation with appropriate officials, including local health officials, and
2 other interested parties shall:

- 3 i. Issue revised water quality criteria for pathogens in coastal recreation water
4 that are harmful to human health, including a revised list of indicators and
5 testing methods; and
- 6 ii. Not less than once every five (5) years thereafter, review and revise the
7 water quality criteria.

8 **SEC. 6. Coastal Beach Water Quality Monitoring.**

9 (a) Monitoring

- 10 i. In general. – not later than one (1) year and one hundred eighty (180) days
11 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate
12 regulations for the monitoring by the Department for:
 - 13 1) Compliance with applicable water quality criteria; and
 - 14 2) Maintenance of public safety.
- 15 ii. Contents of Requirements. – monitoring requirements under this section
16 shall specify, at a minimum –
 - 17 1) Available monitoring methods to be used; and
 - 18 2) The frequency and location of monitoring based on:
 - 19 1. The periods of recreational use of coastal recreation water
20 and beaches;
 - 21 2. The extent and degree of recreational use during the periods
22 described in clause (1);
 - 23 3. The proximity of coastal recreation water to known or
24 identified point and nonpoint sources of pollution; and
 - 25 4. The relationship between the use of public recreation water
26 and beaches to storms events.
 - 27 3) Methods for:
 - 28 1. Detecting levels of pathogens that are harmful to human
29 health;
 - 30 2. Identifying short-term increases in pathogens that are
31 harmful to human health in coastal recreation water,
32 including the relationship of short-term increases in
33 pathogens to storm events; and

1 3. Conditions and procedures under which discrete areas of
2 coastal recreation water may be exempted by the Secretary
3 from the monitoring requirements under this subsection, if
4 the Secretary determines that an exemption will not:

- 5 a. Impair compliance with the applicable water quality
6 criteria for that water; and
7 b. Compromise public safety;

8 (b) Notification Requirements

9 i. In General. – Regulations promulgated under subsection (a) shall require
10 provinces to provide notification of a failure or the likelihood of a failure to
11 meet applicable water quality criteria for provincial coastal recreation water,
12 to:

- 13 1) Local governments;
14 2) The public; and
15 3) The Secretary

16 ii. Information included in Notification. – Notification under this subsection
17 shall require, at a minimum:

- 18 1) The prompt communication of the occurrence, nature, extent, and
19 location of, and substance, including pathogens, involved in a
20 failure or immediate likelihood of a failure to meet water quality
21 criteria, to a designated official of a local government having
22 jurisdiction over land adjoining the coastal recreation water for
23 which the failure or imminent failure to meet water quality criteria
24 is identified; and
25 2) The posting of signs, during the period in which water quality
26 criteria are not met, continues, that is sufficient to give notice to
27 the public:
28 1. Of failure to meet applicable water quality criteria for the
29 water; and
30 2. The potential risks associated with water contact activities in
31 the water.

32 (c) Review and Revision of Regulations. – Periodically, but not less than once every
33 five (5) years, the Secretary shall review and make any necessary revisions to
34 regulations promulgated under this section.

1 (d) Implementation. –

2 i. In General. – Not later than three (3) years and one hundred eighty (180)
3 days after the enactment date of this Act, each province shall implement a
4 monitoring and notification program that conforms to the regulations
5 promulgated under subsections (a) and (b).

6 ii. Revision of Program. – not later than two (2) years after the date of
7 publication of any revision by the Secretary under subsection (c), each
8 province shall revise the program established under paragraph (a) to
9 incorporate the revisions.

10 (e) Guidance: Delegation of Responsibility. –

11 i. In General – not later than one (1) year and one hundred eighty (180) days
12 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue guidance
13 establishing:

14 1) Core performance measures for testing, monitoring, and
15 notification programs under this section; and

16 2) The delegation of testing, monitoring, and notification programs
17 under this section to the local government authorities.

18 (f) Delegation of Responsibility to Local Governments. – if a responsibility described
19 in the above paragraph is delegated by a province to a local government authority,
20 or is delegated to a local government authority before the date of enactment of this
21 section, resources, including grants made, shall be made available to the delegated
22 authority for the purpose of implementing the delegated program in a manner that
23 is consistent with the guidance issued by the Secretary.

24 (g) Floatable Materials Monitoring Technical Assistance. – not later than one (1) year
25 and one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of enactment of this Act, the
26 Secretary shall:

27 i. Provide technical assistance for uniform assessment and monitoring
28 procedures for floatable material in coastal recreation water; and

29 ii. Specify the conditions under which the presence of floatable material shall
30 constitute a threat to public health and safety.

31 (h) Occurrence Database. – the Secretary shall establish, maintain, and make available
32 to the public by electronic and other means –

- 1 i. A national coastal recreation water pollution occurrence database using
2 reliable information, including the information reported under paragraph
3 (a); and
4 ii. A listing of communities conforming to the regulations promulgated under
5 paragraphs (a) and (b).

6 **SEC. 7. Barangay Involvement and Coastal Watch Units.** – Each coastal barangay
7 shall establish a Coastal Watch Unit, in coordination with the LGU and DENR, composed of
8 trained volunteers to assist in monitoring pollution, enforcing beach cleanliness regulations,
9 and reporting violations.

10 **SEC. 8. Report to Congress.** – not later than four (4) years after the date of enactment
11 of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that
12 contains:

- 13 (a) Recommendations concerning the need for additional water quality criteria and
14 other actions that are necessary to improve the quality of coastal recreation water;
15 and
16 (b) An evaluation of effort to implement this Act.

17 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any portion of this Act is declared invalid or
18 unconstitutional, the portions or provisions which are not affected shall continue to be in full
19 force and effect.

20 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and rules and
21 regulations or parts thereof contrary to, or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,
22 modified, or amended accordingly.

23 **SEC. 11. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its
24 publication in the Official Gazette or in any major newspaper of general circulation in the
25 Philippines.

Approved,