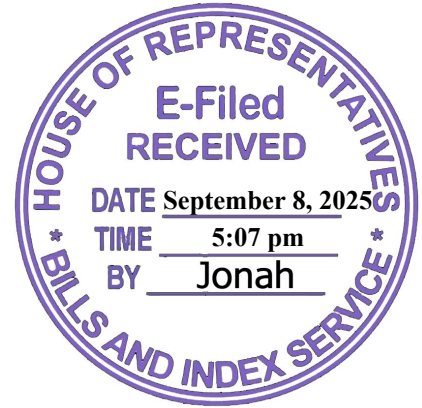


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila  
**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session  
House Bill No. 4427



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**Introduced by Representative**

**BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA**

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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND RATIONALIZING THE REGULATORY CAPACITY  
OF THE BUREAU OF QUARANTINE (BOQ), REORGANIZING AND RENAMING IT  
TO PHILIPPINE QUARANTINE AUTHORITY (PQA), REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT  
9271 (RA 9271), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The State is mandated under Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution to “protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.” In furtherance of this constitutional duty, it is imperative to strengthen and modernize the country’s quarantine system in order to effectively safeguard public health and national security.

The Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ), created under Republic Act No. 9271 or the “Quarantine Act of 2004”, has served as the principal agency responsible for preventing the entry and spread of infectious diseases and other public health threats through the regulation of ports of entry and exit. However, the evolving landscape of public health emergencies—such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the rising threats of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, as well as hazards brought about by chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and environmental agents has underscored the limitations of the existing structure and mandate of the BOQ.

This proposed measure seeks to reorganize and strengthen the Bureau of Quarantine by establishing the Philippine Quarantine Authority (PQA) as a first-class line agency under the

Department of Health. The PQA shall be vested with enhanced regulatory powers and institutional capacity to effectively prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats and emergencies. It will exercise authority over quarantine stations nationwide, regulate and inspect incoming and outgoing vessels and aircrafts, and implement surveillance and preventive measures to secure the country's borders against potential health threats. The bill further empowers the PQA to establish, manage, and, when necessary, close or reorganize quarantine facilities and stations, to issue and enforce rules and regulations aligned with the International Health Regulations of the World Health Organization, and to impose both criminal and administrative penalties for violations of quarantine laws.

The measure also provides the PQA with mechanisms for fiscal autonomy through the retention and utilization of a portion of its income to augment operational requirements. Moreover, it ensures the security of tenure of existing employees of the Bureau of Quarantine by mandating their absorption into the PQA, thereby strengthening institutional continuity while professionalizing and upgrading its organizational capacity.

Through these reforms, the PQA shall be equipped to respond with greater efficiency, speed, and authority to public health emergencies, thereby ensuring the protection of Filipinos and strengthening the country's compliance with international health standards.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian Poe", with a stylized, flowing script.

HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA

Representative

FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List

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*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 "Philippine Quarantine Authority Act of 2025".

**SECTION 2. Office of the Director General.** - The Bureau of Quarantine is hereby reorganized and renamed as the Philippine Quarantine Authority (PQA) which shall be headed by a Director General.

**SECTION 3. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the declared policy of the State to improve the delivery of health care services to the people, and to protect the people from public health threats during public health emergencies through the efficient and effective response system for emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, diseases for elimination and eradication, epidemics, and health events, including chemical, biological, radio-nuclear and environmental agents of public health concern. Pursuant to this policy, the State must enhance the regulatory

policy to strengthen its capability with regard to the inspection, surveillance, apprehension, and detention of any public health threats.

**SECTION 4.** *The Director General and Other Officers of PQA.* - The following are the officers of PQA and their qualifications:

- a. The PQA shall be headed by a Director General, with the rank of Undersecretary, who must be a Doctor of Medicine, preferably with a relevant master's degree in public health. In addition, he or she shall have management experience in his or her field or discipline or profession and in any development, surveillance, or regulatory work as covered in this Act.
- b. The Director General shall be assisted by two (2) Deputy Director Generals, one (1) for Field Regulatory Operations and another for Administration and Finance.
- c. The Director General and Deputy Director Generals shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines upon recommendation of the Secretary of Health.
- d. The Deputy Director General for Field Regulatory Operations of the PQA, with the rank of Assistant Secretary, must be a Doctor of Medicine, preferably with a relevant master's degree in public health. In addition, he or she shall have management experience in his or her field or discipline or profession and in any development, surveillance, or regulatory work as covered in this Act.
- e. The Deputy Director General for Administration and Finance of the PQA, with the rank of Assistant Secretary, shall be a lawyer, certified public accountant or shall possess a master's degree in accounting, management, economics or any business course, and have management experience in a position related to his or her field of discipline or profession.
- f. Each field operation cluster and finance and administrative cluster shall be headed by a Director who shall be assisted by an assistant director. These directors shall be appointed by the Director General, upon the recommendation of the Deputy Director Generals.
- g. The existing Directors and Division Chiefs shall be given preference in the appointment as Deputy Director General, provided that if the current officers of the PQA applying for the above positions lack the required third level civil service eligibility, they will have to comply with the said requirement within three (3) years from the appointment, otherwise their appointment shall be revoked immediately.
- h. The Director General shall control, direct and manage all quarantine stations, grounds, anchorages and designate their boundaries. With the approval of the Secretary of Health, he shall establish such additional quarantine stations, grounds and anchorages. The Director General, in the same manner, may also order the closure of non-functional quarantine stations, grounds and anchorages.

- i. The Director General has the authority to appoint personnel from assistant director and below, as deemed necessary, subject to the requirements and guidelines provided by law.

**SECTION 5.** *Powers and/functions of the PQA.* - The PQA shall, in carrying out the purposes for which it is created, have the following powers and functions:

- a. Examination, at points of entry and exit in the Philippines, of incoming and outgoing vessels and aircrafts, the necessary surveillance over their sanitary conditions, as well as over their cargoes, passengers, crews, and all personal effects, and the issuance of quarantine certificates, bills of health, or other equivalent documents;
- b. Examination of interisland ports of entry and exit in the Philippines of incoming and outgoing vessels and aircrafts, their sanitary conditions, and the necessary surveillance on passengers and crew. In the event of quarantine certificates, bills of threat, examination over their cargoes, all personal effects, the issuance of quarantine certificates, bills of health, or other equivalent documents shall be vested in and be conducted by the PQA;
- c. Authority over incoming and outgoing vessels and aircrafts, both domestic and foreign, private and government-owned, including those of the armed forces, for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this Act;
- d. Authority over quarantine stations nationwide;
- e. Authority over designated national quarantine facilities for international travelers;
- f. Grant, within its capabilities and consistent with its mandate, request for assistance of other government agencies in the performance of their functions;
- g. Detain and hold all passengers, vessels, aircrafts, and cargoes for the purpose of preventing the introduction, transmission or spread of infectious diseases, emerging diseases and public health emergencies of international concern; and
- h. Perform such other powers that may be necessary in the attainment of the objectives of this Act.

**SECTION 6.** *Authority to Promulgate and Enforce Rules and Regulations.* -

- a. The Director General with the approval of the Secretary of Health, is authorized to promulgate and enforce rules and regulations as in his judgment are necessary to prevent the introduction, transmission or spread of "public health emergencies of international concern" from foreign countries into the Philippines or from one (1) domestic seaport/airport to another.
- b. For purposes of implementing these regulations, the Director General may provide intervention strategies such as health education and advisories, inspections, fumigation, disinfection, pest extermination, vaccination for

international travel, medical examination of aliens/foreigners for immigration purposes and destruction of animals or articles found to be infected or contaminated as to be sources of infection to human beings in coordination with other concerned quarantine agencies such as veterinary quarantine, plant quarantine, etc. and other measures as in his judgment may be necessary.

- c. Regulations prescribed under this section shall provide for the apprehension, detention or surveillance for the purpose of preventing the introduction, transmission or spread of such public health emergencies of international concern as may be specified from time to time in Department Orders by the Secretary of Health upon the recommendation of the international health surveillance.
- d. Whenever it is deemed necessary for the protection of the public health of the nation from public health emergencies of international concern, immunization and other preventable measures against these diseases shall be mandatory on all persons arriving at any seaport/airport of entry in the Philippines.
- e. The Secretary of Health, upon the recommendation of the Director General, may prescribe examination of any individual believed to be infected with a disease of international concern on board vessels and aircraft entering any seaport or airport in the Philippines. Such rules and regulations may provide that if upon examination, any such individual is found to be infected or has been exposed to infection considered as dangerous contact, he may be isolated aboard a vessel, in a hospital with facilities for infectious diseases, at a quarantine station, or at any isolation facility, and in such a manner as may be proscribed by the said regulations.

**SECTION 7. *Duties of the PQA.*** - The PQA, with the category of a first-class line agency under the Department of Health, shall perform the following duties:

- a. Implement the country's international commitment, to advance health security capacity, in accordance with the International Health Regulations (IHR) of the World Health Organization (WHO);
- b. Conduct surveillance, apprehension, and detention of any individuals and goods considered as imminent public health threat;
- c. Conduct vector management of wharfage, seaport, and airport terminals, including the areas within the 400- meter controlled perimeter;
- d. Issuance of permits and certificates to food service establishments and service provider for food and water supplies at seaport and airport terminals and inside perimeter;
- e. Uphold preventive care to travelers by formulating policies and guidelines on core components of travel medicine and code of ethical practice of travel medicine in the country; and
- f. Establish and maintain quarantine facilities nationwide.

**SECTION 8. *Quarantine Documentary Requirements and Bills of Health.* -**

- a. All vessels or aircraft from foreign ports arriving at any port of the Philippines shall be required to submit the required maritime declaration of health and general declaration and other documents as prescribed by the regulations.
- b. All ocean-going vessels or international aircraft from foreign seaports or airports calling at any seaport or airport in the Philippines to disembark its passengers or discharge its cargo, or for other purposes must secure a quarantine clearance in compliance with the health regulations. This quarantine certificate or clearance (Pratique) shall be a prerequisite to customs clearance.
- c. After compliance with the quarantine laws and regulations, all vessels or aircraft leaving any seaport or airport of the Philippines shall secure quarantine outgoing clearance. This certificate or clearance shall also be a prerequisite to customs clearance of outgoing vessels and aircraft.
- d. Subject to quarantine laws and regulations, all vessels or aircraft entering and leaving any domestic seaport or airport of the Philippines shall secure quarantine documents during outbreak or regional public health emergency.
- e. Subject to quarantine laws and regulations, during an outbreak or national public health emergency, for local and international travel, individuals shall secure applicable bills of health.
- f. All immigrant visa applicants, student visa applicants, pre-arranged employment visa applicants, visa applicants obviously afflicted with Class A condition and tourist visa applicants from selected countries based on WHO Guidelines, shall, as a pre-requisite to the issuance of their respective visa by the Bureau of Immigration, secure a Quarantine Clearance from the PQA and no visa shall be issued by the Bureau of Immigration, to the aforementioned applicants, without the required Quarantine Clearance from the PQA.
- g. Such other documents which may be required by WHO and other international and national regulatory bodies relating to the purposes of this Act.

**SECTION 9. *Prohibition of Entry of Hazardous Cargo and Materials* -** Whenever the Director General determines that there is an existence of any public health emergency of international concern in a foreign country, and that there is imminent danger of the introduction of hazardous cargoes or materials into the Philippines, he/she, in coordination with the Bureau of Customs and other concerned agencies, may recommend to the President, through the Secretary of Health, the prohibition of its entry for public health interest.

**SECTION 10. *Penalties.* -**

- a. Criminal liability of persons violating quarantine laws.

- i. Whoever violates or refuses to comply with the provisions of this Act or whoever enters or departs from the limits of any quarantine stations, grounds or anchorages without prior compliance with the quarantine rules and regulations or without permission from the quarantine officer in charge, shall be punished by a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php50,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php150,000.00), or by imprisonment of not more than one (1) year, or both, at the discretion of the court.
- ii. If the act or omission penalized by this Act be committed by an association, partnership, corporation or any other institution, its managing head, directors or partners shall be liable to the penalties provided in this Act for the offense.
- iii. Criminal action arising from a violation of the provisions of this Act may be commenced by the PQA either under this Act, or in appropriate cases, under the Revised Penal Code. Provided, that such criminal action may be filed by the PQA in the city or municipality where the PQA Quarantine Station is located if the violation was committed within its territorial jurisdiction or in Metro Manila, at the option of the PQA.

b. Administrative Penalties.

- i. The PQA shall, motu proprio or upon a complaint or charge by any individual, corporation, association, or organization, against any person, vessel or aircraft, or their agent, or any of its personnel who violated the provisions of this Act, its Implementing Rules and Regulations, terms and conditions, orders, instructions or rules and regulations of PQA, investigate and verify if such person vessel, aircraft, or their agent, or any of its personnel, is guilty of the charges or complaints.
- ii. Any person who violated or otherwise failed to comply with the terms and conditions, orders, instructions or rules and regulations of the PQA shall be subject to a fine of at least Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php50,000.00) but not exceeding One Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php150,000.00), and the PQA is hereby authorized and empowered to impose such fine, after due notice and hearing.
- iii. Any vessel or aircraft, or their agent, who violated or otherwise failed to comply with the terms and conditions, orders, instructions or rules and regulations of the PQA shall be subject to a fine of at least Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php500,000.00) but not exceeding One Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php1,500,000.00), and the PQA is hereby authorized and empowered to impose such a fine, after due notice and hearing.

- iv. The fines so imposed shall be paid to the PQA, and failure to pay the fine in any case within the period specified in the order or decision of the PQA shall be deemed good and sufficient reason for withholding the operation of the vessel or aircraft, or their agent, until payment shall be made. Payment may also be enforced by appropriate action brought in a court of competent jurisdiction. The remedy provided in this section shall not be a bar to, or affect any other remedy provided in this Act but shall be cumulative and additional to such remedy or remedies.
- v. Implementation of the orders or decisions of the PQA may also be enforced by mandamus or injunction in appropriate cases, or by action to compel the specific performance of the orders or decisions so made, or of the duties imposed by this Act upon such person, vessel or aircraft, or their agent.

**SECTION 11. *Fees and Other Incomes* -**

- a. There shall be determined and constituted additional fees such as sale of publications and services, assessment fees, fines, penalties, and other fees and charges outside the usual fees such as but not limited to vaccination, laboratory, quarantine permits; to be known as "other related regulatory fees".
- b. The Director General of the PQA, upon approval of the Secretary of Health, shall be authorized to promulgate rules and regulations governing the collection of the "other related regulatory fees".
- c. Upon the sole approval of the Secretary of Health, the authorization and other fees shall be reviewed by the PQA every three (3) years.

**SECTION 12. *Authority to Utilize Income.*** - The PQA may be authorized by the President, through the Secretary of Health, to retain and/or use not less than fifty percent (50%) of its income generated subject to accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

All such incomes allowed to be retained shall be deposited in an authorized government depository bank as a special regulatory fund. Any interest earned by such fund shall form part of the retained income. Such fund shall be used to augment the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) and Capital Outlay requirements for existing items in the PQA's budget.

**SECTION 13. *Absorption of Employees of Bureau of Quarantine.*** - The existing employees of the Bureau of Quarantine shall enjoy security of tenure and shall be absorbed by the PQA, in accordance with their staffing patterns as prescribed under the prevailing laws.

**SECTION 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the PQA shall, in consultation with other concerned government agencies

and private stakeholders, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

**SECTION 15. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations for the Bureau of Quarantine. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). The PQA shall include in its proposed budget the necessary amount to enable it to achieve its mandate of ensuring security against the introduction and spread of infectious diseases, emerging diseases and public health emergencies of international concern.

**SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.*** - In the event any provision of this Act or the application of such provision to any person or circumstances is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act or the application of said provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected by such declaration.

**SECTION 17. *Repealing Clause.*** - This act explicitly repeals the Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9271, or the Quarantine Act of 2004. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, memorandum orders, memorandum circulars, administrative orders, ordinances, and other issuances, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby revoked, amended, or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 18. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

  
HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA  
Representative  
FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List