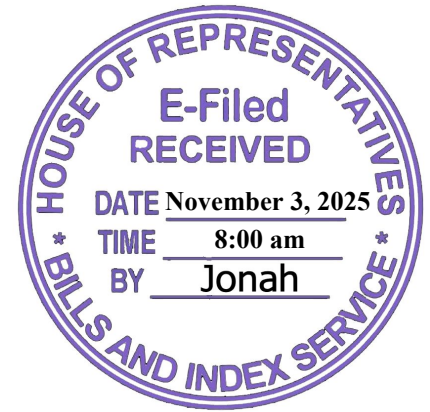




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 5729

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Workers in critical industries, including those in healthcare, logistics, agriculture, and essential services, serve as the backbone of our society during states of calamity or emergency, public health emergencies, or national crises. They often face heightened risks without adequate compensation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, frontline workers such as nurses, supermarket staff, delivery drivers, and sanitation crews continued their duties amid grave danger. Over 33,000 healthcare workers contracted COVID-19 as of the last quarter of 2022,¹ and nearly 13% of COVID-related deaths in the Philippines were among health workers, substantially higher than neighboring ASEAN countries.² Despite these risks, many workers did not receive timely or sufficient hazard pay, highlighting the urgent need for a standardized system of compensation.

The country's experience during the pandemic also revealed the vulnerability of key sectors to labor shortages and burnout. Hospitals suffered mass resignations due to delayed incentives and overwhelming workloads. In agriculture and food services, around 70% of farming communities reported job losses.³ The transportation sector was also strained, with 52% of public transport drivers being affected by job cuts.⁴ These disruptions highlight how critical yet undervalued these workers are in contributing to the nation's resilience.

Many of these frontline workers also come from marginalized sectors with limited access to social safety nets, yet they have demonstrated through their work their unwavering commitment, even in the face of displacement, disease, and danger.

¹ DOH, as cited by Philstar. Over 33,000 HCWs contracted COVID-19. Published on 16 September 2022. Available at <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/09/16/2210024/over-33000-hcws-contracted-covid-19> (Accessed on 07 July 2025).

² The Asia-Pacific Journal. Misplaced Priorities, Unnecessary Effects: Collective Suffering and Survival in Pandemic Philippines. Published in August 2020. Available at <https://apjif.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/10/article-359.pdf> (Accessed on 08 July 2025).

³ World Bank. How COVID-19 impacted vulnerable communities in the Philippines. Published on 10 November 2021. Available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/eastasiapacific/how-covid-19-impacted-vulnerablecommunities-philippines> (Accessed on 08 July 2025).

⁴ *Ibid.*

Thus, establishing a clear and consistent hazard pay policy would not only recognize the sacrifices of workers in critical industries, but also provide financial protection for them as they risk their lives to keep services running during crises.

Therefore, this measure proposes the institutionalization of a hazard pay, equivalent to at least 25% of daily basic wages, to acknowledge the indispensable role that essential workers play in maintaining the stability of our communities. This bill also includes third-party workers such as security guards and sanitation personnel to ensure that no essential worker is left behind.

It is the view of the undersigned that a hazard pay system would also support workforce retention and ensure continuity of services during future emergencies. More importantly, it would reinforce worker morale and incentivize professionals to remain in high-risk roles despite the challenges.

In an era marked by climate change, pandemics, and geopolitical uncertainties, ensuring fair treatment of essential workers is both a moral and strategic imperative. Through this measure, the country can take a decisive step towards building a more resilient, equitable, and prepared society. Hazard pay is not just about remuneration, it is about valuing the labor and lives of those who keep the nation functioning in its most trying moments. Recognizing and supporting these individuals through a clear, inclusive, and enforceable policy would affirm the country's commitment to justice and sustainability in times of crisis.

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


EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



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HOUSE BILL NO. 5729

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EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
GRANTING HAZARD PAY TO WORKERS IN CRITICAL INDUSTRIES DURING A STATE OF CALAMITY OR EMERGENCY OR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Hazard Pay for*
2 *Workers in Critical Industries Act*".

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The State shall promote the protection of all
5 workers and ensure their health and safety during a state of calamity or emergency or
6 public health emergency concern. Towards this end, workers in critical industries shall
7 be provided with additional benefit for the duration of these events, taking into account
8 the nature of their functions and exposure to various hazards by reason of their
9 functions.

10
11 **SEC. 3. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to all workers in critical industries in
12 the private sector.

13 For the purposes of this Act, "workers in critical industries" shall refer to workers
14 in critical establishments, who are exposed to greater danger, contagion, radiation,
15 virus, disease, or peril from natural calamities, such as volcanic activity/eruption and
16 typhoons. Critical establishments shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 17 a) Hospitals, sanitarium, rural health units, main health centers, health infirmaries,
18 barangay health stations, clinics, laboratories, and other health-related
19 establishments;
20 b) Morgues and mortuaries;
21 c) Banks and other financial institutions providing money transfer services;
22 d) Groceries, supermarket, and convenience stores;
23 e) Public markets;
24 f) Pharmacies or drugstores, or similar establishments authorized to dispense
25 medicines;
26 g) Restaurants;
27 h) Logistics and warehouse establishments;

- i) Food and medical manufacturing establishments;
 - j) Telecommunications companies;
 - k) Mass media companies, with respect to their reporters and similar personnel in-charge of delivering news;
 - l) Electric generation, transmission, and distribution companies;
 - m) Gasoline stations;
 - n) Oil companies, with respect to their tanker drivers;
 - o) Water distribution companies, including water delivery and refilling stations;
 - p) Companies engaged in sanitation, such as garbage collection;
 - q) Companies involved in the Philippine capital market, such as the Philippine Stock Exchange and Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corporation, among others;
 - r) Hotels and similar establishments, upon such terms and conditions as the appropriate agencies overseeing the calamity, disaster, or public health emergency prescribe;
 - s) Mass public transportation companies;
 - t) Civil aviation and maritime transport companies; and
 - u) Such other establishments which may be considered critical in light of the nature of the state of calamity or emergency or public health concern.
- For the avoidance of doubt, workers of third-party service contractors, such as security guards and sanitation personnel, who are deployed to any of the foregoing establishments shall also receive the benefit provided under this Act for the duration of the calamity, emergency, or public health emergency.

SEC. 4. Hazard Pay. – When a state of calamity or emergency, or a public health emergency, as defined under Republic Act No. 11332, otherwise known as the "Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act," has been declared, workers in critical industries who actually rendered service during the state of calamity or emergency or public health emergency, shall be compensated with hazard allowances equivalent to at least twenty-five percent (25%) of their respective daily basic salary for the duration thereof.

SEC. 5. Non-Diminution of Benefits. - Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish existing benefits under existing laws, company policies, and collective bargaining agreements.

SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall, in consultation with the appropriate government agencies and other relevant stakeholders, promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. Separability Clause. - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1 **SEC. 9. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
2 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
3

4 *Approved,*