

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 7457



Introduced by Representatives EDVIC G. YAP and ERIC G. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize a swift, coordinated, and cost-free system for transporting relief goods to communities affected by disasters and emergencies. It responds to recurring challenges in disaster response where donated goods are delayed or fail to reach intended beneficiaries due to logistical constraints, high transport costs, and fragmented coordination among stakeholders.

In 2025 alone, the Philippines experienced a high number of devastating natural calamities. Several strong typhoons, including Nando, Tino, and Uwan, caused widespread flooding, displacement, and damage to infrastructure across multiple provinces¹. The country was also shaken by major earthquakes, including a magnitude 6.9 quake in Cebu² and twin earthquakes measuring 7.4 and 6.7 in Davao Oriental, resulting in casualties and significant disruptions to affected communities³.

The measure establishes a clear policy framework that mobilizes both public and private sector logistics capabilities during disasters. It directs common carriers, freight forwarders, freight companies, private carriers, and other logistics service providers to transport donated relief goods free of charge for duly registered relief organizations.

The bill further addresses operational concerns by allocating certain auxiliary shipping costs, such as port charges or arrastre services, to appropriate authorities, while recognizing container costs, turnaround time, and cargo volume to help minimize losses for private sector participants. It aims to ensure that humanitarian assistance moves quickly and efficiently to areas declared

¹ Rappler.com. (2025, December 10). 2025: Another year of destructive storms for the Philippines. <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/suggested-reads-storms-nando-opong-paolo-ramil-tino-uwan-2025/>

² Shankar, P. (2025, October 1). Deadly earthquake hits Philippines: What we know so far. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/1/deadly-earthquake-hits-philippines-what-we-know-so-far>

³ Inquirer.NET & Germelina, L. (2025, October 21). Close to 1 million people affected by Davao Oriental twin quakes. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2127853/close-to-1-million-people-affected-by-davao-oriental-twin-quakes>

under a state of calamity, especially when government resources are insufficient to meet urgent needs.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Edvic G. Yap', written in a cursive style.

HON. EDVIC G. YAP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric G. Yap', written in a cursive style.

HON. ERIC G. YAP

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House Bill No. **7457**

Introduced by Representatives EDVIC G. YAP and ERIC G. YAP

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 “*Relief Goods Free Transportation Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to strengthen existing mechanisms that will facilitate quick responses to the demands and needs during disaster and emergencies and to encourage altruism among the citizens when it is necessary to provide timely relief to the victims of catastrophic phenomena by engaging the services of both 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 secured manner.

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

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

b. Disaster refers to a serious 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 to cope using its own resources;

c. Donated goods or articles refer to food or non-food items responsive to any situation affecting disadvantaged or distressed individuals and families

in order to meet their basic needs, given in kind by any individual or group or entities;

d. Duly registered relief organization refers to any relief organization, not operated for profit, duly registered, licensed or accredited with any national government agency;

e. Emergency refers to an unforeseen or sudden occurrence, especially danger, demanding immediate action;

f. Freight companies refer to companies that specialize in the moving or transporting of freight or cargo from one place to another and categorized either as international freight forwarders or domestic freight forwarders;

g. Freight forwarders refer to persons or companies that organize shipments for individuals or corporations to get goods from the manufacturer or producer to a market, customer or final point of distribution;

h. International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) refers to any aid and action taken by any duly coordinated foreign government or organization in the form of financial donations, international relief workers and in-kind donations, for the benefit of disaster-stricken areas, aimed at providing emergency response, rehabilitation and recovery operations to mitigate the effects of disasters or major emergencies;

i. Private carriers refer to those entities that undertake the delivery of goods or passengers for compensation, without being engaged in the business of carrying as a public employment;

j. Relief refers to interventions to alleviate, ease, or mitigate a distressed or critical situation affecting persons, families, groups or communities;

k. 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;

l. Response Cluster refers to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) cluster of government agencies and instrumentalities and humanitarian agencies working in a unified manner to provide assistance to the needs of communities affected by a disaster; and

m. State of calamity refers to a condition involving mass casualty or major damages to property and public infrastructure, disruption of means of livelihood, and the normal way of life in the areas affected by the occurrence of a disaster, whether natural or human-induced.

SEC. 4. *Free Freight for the Transportation of Relief Goods.* — With the aim of bringing immediate relief to victims of natural or man-made disasters when government resources are not available or are insufficient to address the needs of the emergency, the Logistics Cluster of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), in

coordination with the Philippine Postal Corporation (PPC) and all freight companies, common carriers, private carriers, freight forwarders and other companies providing logistic services in the Philippines are hereby mandated to 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 or a local government unit (LGU) concerned through its Sanggunian.

These common carriers, freight forwarders, and other similar entities are mandated to deliver goods and services free of charge to areas where they operate.

When the area is not accessible, such relief goods shall be sent or delivered to the nearest LGU and shall be consigned to the concerned local chief executive.

Certain shipping auxiliary cost, such as those for *arrastre* services, pilotage, and other port charges that are routinely passed on to customers, shall be borne by the concerned *arrastre*, pilotage, and port authorities: *Provided*, That container van costs, turnaround time, and volume of cargo being shipped free of charge shall be considered in order to minimize the loss of profits of the private sector.

SEC. 5. *Vigilance Over Relief Goods*. — The Law and Order Cluster of the NDRRMC shall be responsible for providing security and traffic management assistance to the Response Cluster's operations to facilitate the speedy movement of people, goods, and equipment to the affected population and responding agencies.

SEC. 6. *Release of Donated Relief Goods and Articles* — The release of donated relief goods and articles intended for distribution to areas under a state of calamity shall be in accordance with 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 (DepEd), Department of Health (DOH), LGUs, and other government agencies mandated to authorize the distribution of these relief goods and articles, with proper verification of the receiver and in consideration of prevailing policies of freight service and logistics companies and carriers.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Agency*. — The OCD and the Department of Transportation (DOTr), through the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), shall implement the provisions of this Act, monitor and oversee compliance of freight service companies, common and private carriers and other companies providing logistic services as provided for under this Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. — To carry out the provisions of this Act, the OCD, in coordination with the DOTR, through the CAB, MARINA and LTFRB, BOC, PPC, DSWD, and the association or authorized representatives of freight service companies and freight forwarders, common and private carriers and other companies offering logistic services in the country shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, issue the implementing rules and regulations, including a mechanism or procedure in availing the free services as provided for under this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,