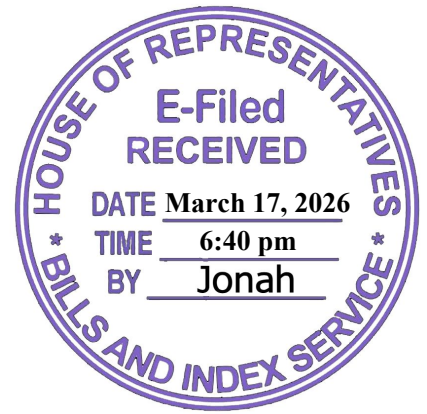




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8643



Introduced by Rep. ROBERT NAZAL

**AN ACT PROVIDING EMERGENCY RELIEF
THROUGH TEMPORARY TOLL FEE RELIEF AND THE REDUCTION OR
SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY-RELATED PORT
CHARGES DURING PERIODS OF EXTRAORDINARY FUEL PRICE INCREASES,
IN ORDER TO MITIGATE THE COST OF TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICS, AND
BASIC COMMODITIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution directs the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that improve the quality of life of all. Article XII, Section 6 likewise recognizes that the use of property bears a social function and that economic activity must contribute to the common good. These constitutional principles are especially relevant when external shocks sharply raise the cost of fuel and, in turn, increase the cost of transportation, logistics, and basic commodities throughout the country.

The Philippines remains highly vulnerable to international fuel price movements. Recent public reporting has shown that domestic pump prices continue to respond to volatility in global benchmarks. In a March 10, 2026 report, BusinessMirror stated that legislators raised concerns after another round of oil price hikes, with reported increases reaching as much as ₱38.50 per liter for kerosene, ₱17.50 to ₱24.25 per liter for diesel, and ₱7.00 to ₱13.00 per liter for gasoline, and further noted that pricing in the deregulated downstream oil industry is tied to the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), a benchmark widely used in Asia.

In an archipelagic country such as the Philippines, the effects of fuel price surges do not end at the gasoline station. They cascade through tollways, ports, cargo movement, inter-island shipping, public transport, and supply chains for food, medicine, construction materials, agricultural inputs, and other essential goods. When transport and logistics costs rise, these increases are passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices for basic commodities and services. The State therefore has a compelling interest to provide temporary and targeted relief measures during periods of extraordinary fuel price increases.

This proposed measure addresses that need through two immediate interventions.

First, it grants a fifty percent (50%) toll fee discount for all motorists during a declared emergency relief period, while providing zero toll fees for qualified logistics vehicles and public transport.

Second, it authorizes the temporary reduction or suspension of the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) share in selected port charges, including arrastre, stevedoring, roll-on/roll-off fees, wharfage, and similarly situated charges under PPA authority. These mechanisms are designed to reduce transportation and logistics costs at critical points in the movement of people and goods.

The toll component of the bill has been carefully structured in recognition of the existing legal and contractual framework governing toll operations. Presidential Decree No. 1112, or the Toll Operation Decree, created the Toll Regulatory Board and provides the legal framework for toll operation and regulation. Jurisprudence likewise recognizes that toll fees are collected at rates fixed and/or authorized by the Toll Regulatory Board. At the same time, the current public-private partnership framework recognizes the role of the regulator in approving or disapproving adjustments to tolls, fees, rentals, charges, and other tariffs.

For this reason, the bill does not merely command private toll operators to absorb losses. Instead, it adopts a user-side relief model under which the toll-paying public receives the mandated discount or exemption, while the unpaid portion may be covered by the National Government through a lawful subsidy, reimbursement, deferred recovery, tariff rebalancing, or similar mechanism, subject to appropriations, audit requirements, applicable concession agreements, and implementing rules. This approach is more legally workable because it preserves the public relief objective while respecting the regulatory and contractual realities of toll projects. It also reduces the risk of challenges based on impairment of contract or uncompensated regulatory interference.

The PPA component of the bill is likewise grounded on a practical fiscal policy judgment. Official PPA disclosures reported that the agency remitted ₱5.203 billion in dividends to the National Treasury in 2025, reflecting its strong financial position. Port charges under PPA authority are part of a government-regulated system, and the bill limits relief only to the PPA share or such portion of charges as is under PPA regulatory or administrative authority. That is a narrower and more defensible design than an across-the-board reduction of all private cargo-handling or port service charges.

The bill also adopts objective standards and safeguards. It ties the trigger for emergency relief to a measurable increase in MOPS over a defined thirty-day period. It limits each declaration to a maximum period of six months. It requires a factual basis, defined scope, and stated duration in every declaration. It assigns implementation to the Department of Transportation in coordination with the Toll Regulatory Board, the Philippine Ports Authority, the Department of Energy, the Department of Budget and Management, and other agencies. It further requires mechanisms for validation, billing, reimbursement, monitoring, and prevention of abuse. These features are intended to make the law targeted, temporary, auditable, and administratively workable.

Sa panahon ng biglaang taas-presyo ng langis, hindi dapat manatiling tagamasid lamang ang pamahalaan habang ang bawat dagdag-gastos sa biyahe at kargamento ay ipinapasa sa taumbayan. Ang bawas-toll para sa lahat, zero toll para sa logistics at public transport, at pansamantalang bawas sa PPA share sa piling port charges ay mga kongkretong hakbang upang mapagaan ang pasanin ng mamamayan at mapigil ang pagtaas ng presyo ng mga pangunahing bilihin bago pa ito tuluyang maramdaman sa bawat hapag-kainan.

This bill is therefore a practical consumer-protection and anti-inflation measure. It gives the State a lawful, temporary, and fiscally supervised tool to respond to extraordinary fuel price increases by reducing transport and logistics burdens at critical points in the supply chain.

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



ROBERT NAZAL
Representative

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BASIC COMMODITIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

Section 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the “**Transport and Logistics Cost Relief Act.**”

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to protect consumers from excessive increases in the prices of fuel, food, medicine, and other basic goods and services, and to adopt responsive measures that reduce transportation and logistics costs during periods of extraordinary fuel price increases. The State recognizes that toll fees and port-related charges significantly affect the movement of people and goods across the country and, when combined with rising fuel prices, materially increase the burden on households, workers, farmers, fisherfolk, businesses, and public utility operators. In times of extraordinary fuel price shocks, the State shall implement temporary and targeted relief measures to cushion the public from inflationary effects and to support national economic stability.

Sec. 3. Statement of Objectives. – This Act shall have the following objectives:

(a) To provide immediate and practical relief from transportation and logistics costs during periods of extraordinary fuel price increases;

(b) To reduce the pass-on effect of fuel, toll, and port-related charges on the prices of basic necessities and prime commodities;

(c) To support the continued viability of logistics operators, cargo carriers, public transport operators, farmers, fisherfolk, and other sectors dependent on the movement of goods and persons;

(d) To authorize temporary toll fee relief, as well as the reduction or suspension of the Philippine Ports Authority share in selected port charges, in the interest of consumer welfare and economic stability; and

(e) To promote a fairer and more responsive transport cost structure during periods of global or domestic fuel-related disruption.

Sec. 4. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act:

(a) "Extraordinary fuel price increase" refers to a situation determined under this Act where global oil prices or domestic fuel prices rise to levels that significantly threaten consumer welfare, transport affordability, logistics viability, or price stability of essential goods;

(b) "Toll fee" refers to any charge collected for the use of toll expressways, toll roads, toll bridges, or similar tolled transport infrastructure under law, franchise, concession agreement, or regulatory approval;

(c) "Logistics vehicles" refer to trucks, delivery vehicles, cargo haulers, freight vehicles, and similar vehicles principally used for the transport of goods, raw materials, agricultural produce, fuel, construction materials, medicines, or other commercial or essential cargo, as may be further classified under the implementing rules and regulations;

(d) "Public transport" refers to public utility vehicles and other modes of public land transportation authorized by law, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, or other competent government authority to transport passengers for compensation;

(e) "PPA share" refers to the portion of port charges, dues, rentals, assessments, or collections imposed, received, or remitted for the benefit of the Philippine Ports Authority under existing laws, regulations, schedules, contracts, concessions, memoranda, or administrative issuances; and

(f) "Port charges" refer to charges imposed on cargo handling, vessel operations, terminal use, or port usage, including but not limited to arrastre, stevedoring, wharfage, and roll-on/roll-off fees.

Sec. 5. Trigger for Emergency Relief Measures. - The emergency relief measures under this Act may be implemented upon determination by the President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, and the National Economic and Development Authority, that an extraordinary fuel price increase exists and that temporary intervention is necessary to protect the public and stabilize the economy.

For purposes of this Act, an extraordinary fuel price increase shall be deemed to exist when the average Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) for gasoline or diesel for any continuous thirty (30)-day period has increased by at least twenty percent (20%) over the average MOPS for the immediately preceding thirty (30)-day period.

Any declaration under this Act shall specify the factual basis, scope, coverage, and duration of the relief measures, subject to the six (6)-month maximum period provided in this Act.

Sec. 6. Temporary Toll Fee Relief for All Motorists. - During the effectivity of an emergency relief period declared under this Act, all motorists using covered toll facilities shall pay only fifty percent (50%) of the applicable toll rate.

The remaining fifty percent (50%) of the applicable toll rate shall be shouldered by the National Government through a targeted subsidy, reimbursement, deferred recovery, tariff rebalancing, or other lawful mechanism, subject to existing laws, rules, regulations, appropriations, audit requirements, applicable concession agreements, and the implementing rules and regulations.

The Toll Regulatory Board, in coordination with the Department of Transportation and concerned tollway operators and concessionaires, shall prescribe the procedures for implementation, validation, billing, reimbursement, recovery, or adjustment under this Sec..

Sec. 7. Toll Fee Relief for Logistics and Public Transport. - During the effectivity of an emergency relief period declared under this Act, qualified logistics vehicles and public transport vehicles using covered toll facilities shall be exempt from the payment of toll fees.

The full amount of the applicable toll fees covered by such exemption shall be shouldered by the National Government through a targeted subsidy, reimbursement, deferred recovery, tariff rebalancing, or other lawful mechanism, subject to existing laws, rules, regulations, appropriations, audit requirements, applicable concession agreements, and the implementing rules and regulations.

The Toll Regulatory Board, in coordination with the Department of Transportation and concerned tollway operators and concessionaires, shall prescribe the documentary, technological, plate-based, fleet-based, franchise-based, or account-based mechanisms for identifying qualified vehicles and preventing abuse, as well as the procedures for implementation, validation, billing, reimbursement, recovery, or adjustment under this Sec..

Sec. 8. Temporary Port Charge Relief. — During the effectivity of a declared fuel emergency under this Act, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) is hereby directed, consistent with its powers under existing laws, to implement temporary and targeted relief measures on port charges and related fees under its jurisdiction.

Such measures may include, but are not limited to:

a) The review, reduction, deferment, or temporary suspension of the PPA share in port charges, including but not limited to arrastre, stevedoring, wharfage, and Roll-on/Roll-off (RoRo) fees;

b) The prioritization of relief for vessels and cargoes engaged in the transport of essential goods, including food, fuel, medicine, and other critical commodities, as well as public utility and inter-island transport services;

c) The adoption of mechanisms to ensure the continued viability of port operations while minimizing the pass-through of increased logistics costs to consumers.

In the implementation of this Section, the PPA shall:

a) Act in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), and Department of Finance (DOF);

b) Ensure that such measures are time-bound, transparent, and subject to periodic review, and shall not exceed the duration of the declared fuel emergency unless otherwise extended by law; and,

c) Take into consideration existing contracts, concession agreements, and financial obligations, and adopt appropriate measures to address any resulting revenue shortfall, subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as diminishing the regulatory authority of the PPA under Presidential Decree No. 857, but rather as a policy directive to guide the exercise of such authority in times of extraordinary fuel price increases.

Sec. 9. Coverage and Prioritization. - In implementing the relief measures under this Act, the concerned agencies shall prioritize routes, sectors, and users whose transport and logistics costs have the greatest effect on consumer prices and public welfare, including:

(a) Inter-island cargo movement of essential goods;

(b) Public land transportation;

(c) Food and agricultural supply chains;

(d) Fuel and energy supply logistics;

(e) Medicine and health-related distribution; and

(f) Such other strategic sectors as may be identified by the implementing agencies.

Sec. 10. Toll Relief Funding and Recovery Mechanism. - The National Government shall, subject to appropriations and existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations, fund the toll fee relief authorized under this Act through a targeted subsidy, reimbursement, deferred recovery, tariff rebalancing, or similar lawful mechanism: Provided, That any such mechanism shall be limited to the verified and auditable value of the relief actually granted under this Act and shall not be construed as a blanket guarantee of revenues or profits.

Sec. 11. Consumer Benefit and Monitoring. - The benefits arising from toll fee relief and the reduction or suspension of PPA-related charges under this Act shall, as far as practicable, redound to commuters, shippers, producers, traders, transport operators, and consumers through reduced costs, lower transport expenses, improved fare stability where applicable, or moderated price increases in basic goods.

The Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Transportation, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, the Toll Regulatory Board, the Philippine Ports Authority, and other concerned agencies shall coordinate to monitor compliance and prevent unjustified retention of benefits by intermediaries.

Sec. 12. Duration of Relief Measures. - The emergency relief measures authorized under this Act shall be temporary in nature and shall remain in effect only for the period specified in the relevant proclamation, executive issuance, or administrative order: Provided, That such period shall not exceed six (6) months for each declaration. Any extension, renewal, or reimposition of such measures shall require a new determination, in accordance with this Act, that the conditions justifying the same continue to exist.

Sec. 13. Lead Agencies. - The Department of Transportation shall be the lead agency for the implementation of this Act in coordination with the Toll Regulatory Board, the Philippine Ports Authority, the Department of Energy, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Agriculture, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, the National Economic and Development Authority, the Department of Budget and Management, and other concerned government agencies.

Sec. 14. Appropriations. - The funds necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the respective budgets of the concerned agencies for the current year, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Toll Regulatory Board, the Philippine Ports Authority, the Department of Energy, the Department of Budget and Management, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within thirty (30) days from its effectivity.

Sec. 16. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

Sec. 17. Separability Clause. – If, for any reason, any Sec. or provision of this Act is declared null and void, no other Sec., provision, or part thereof shall be affected and the same shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 18. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect immediately after publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.