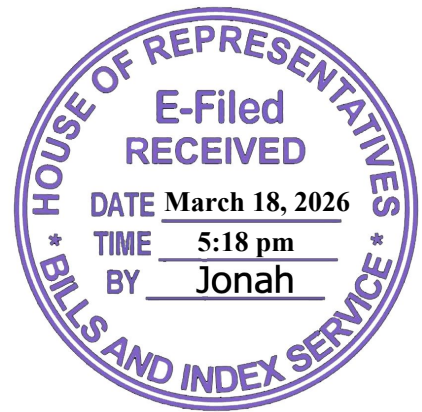


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 8673

**Introduced by AKBAYAN Representatives PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA,
JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL" I. DIOKNO, and DADAH KIRAM ISMULA and
Dinagat Islands Representative KAKA BAG-AO**

AN ACT
PROVIDING HAZARD PAY FOR CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL
ASSIGNED OR DEPLOYED IN THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution asserts our sovereignty over the archipelago's waters around, between, and connecting the islands of the archipelago as stated in Article I, while it mandates the state to protect its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone (EEZ) for exclusive enjoyment of Filipinos as stated in Article XII, Section 2.

Meanwhile, the West Philippine Sea has become a critical area for the protection of the Philippines' maritime sovereignty, national security, and economic resources. Various government agencies deploy not only uniformed personnel but also civilian staff to support maritime patrols, logistics operations, scientific research, fisheries monitoring, and technical missions in the area.

The importance of maintaining an active Philippine presence in the West Philippine Sea was further affirmed by the landmark ruling in *Philippines v. China Arbitration*, decided by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on 12 July 2016¹. The tribunal ruled in favor of the Philippines, declaring that China's expansive "nine-dash line" claim has no legal basis under international law and affirming the Philippines' sovereign rights within its Exclusive Economic Zone under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In the aftermath of this ruling, the Philippine government has intensified maritime patrols, fisheries protection, scientific research, and logistical operations in the West

¹ Michaela Del Callar, *Int'l Tribunal Invalidates China's Nine-Dash Line, Massive Claims*, GMA News (July 12, 2016, 5:31 PM), <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/573371/int-l-tribunal-invalidates-china-s-nine-dash-line-massive-claims/story/>

Philippine Sea in order to safeguard the country’s sovereign rights and marine resources². Civilian government personnel—such as researchers, technical staff, fisheries monitors, and logistics specialists—play a crucial role in these operations alongside uniformed personnel from agencies such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine Coast Guard.

However, civilian government personnel assigned to the West Philippine Sea often face hazardous working conditions, including severe weather, extended deployments at sea, and exposure to security threats due to heightened geopolitical tensions in the region³⁴. Despite the risks associated with their duties, many civilian workers supporting these operations do not receive adequate compensation recognizing the hazardous nature of their assignments.

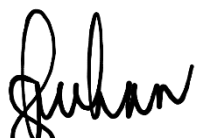
Recognizing the strategic importance of the West Philippine Sea and the invaluable contributions of civilian personnel to the protection of the nation’s maritime rights, it is imperative that the State provide appropriate compensation and welfare support for those who serve in this challenging operational environment.

This measure seeks to grant hazard pay and related benefits to civilian government personnel assigned to the West Philippine Sea in order to promote fairness, enhance morale, and ensure the continued effectiveness of government operations in the area.

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


PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA
Akabay Representative


JOSE MANUEL TADEO
"CHEL" I. DIOKNO
Akabay Representative


DADAN KIRAM ISMULA
Akabay Representative


KAKA J. BAG-AO
Dinagat Islands Representative

² Martin Sadongdong, PCG Intensifies Patrols at Bajo de Masinloc amid Suspected Island-Building Activities by China, Manila Bulletin (Oct. 4, 2025), <https://mb.com.ph/2025/10/04/pcg-intensifies-patrols-at-bajo-de-masinloc-amid-suspected-island-building-activities-by-china>
³ Jim Gomez, Philippines Condemns Chinese Coast Guard’s Use of Water Cannon on a Research Vessel, Associated Press (May 22, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/south-china-sea-sandy-cay-philippines-a9f7522ee0d3c71fddce8a3e81543107>
⁴ Jacob Lazaro, PH to Protest China’s Attack on BFAR Vessel, Philippine Daily Inquirer (Oct. 13, 2025), <https://www.inquirer.net/457638/ph-to-protest-chinas-attack-on-bfar-vessel/>

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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 "West Philippine Sea Civilian Employees Hazard Pay Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize the risks and hazards faced by civilian government personnel assigned or deployed in the West Philippine Sea and to provide them with adequate compensation, benefits, and protection commensurate with the dangers inherent in their assignments.

SECTION 3. Coverage. This Act shall apply to all civilian government personnel who are assigned, detailed, or deployed to perform duties in the West Philippine Sea, including personnel from the following agencies:

- a) Department of National Defense
- b) Armed Forces of the Philippines (civilian employees)
- c) Philippine Coast Guard
- d) Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
- e) Department of Science and Technology
- f) Other government agencies whose personnel are directly involved in maritime operations, research, monitoring, or logistical support in the West Philippine Sea.

This coverage shall include permanent, temporary, contractual, and job-order personnel performing duties in the area.

SECTION 4. *Grant of Hazard Pay.* Civilian government personnel covered under this Act who are physically deployed in maritime operations in the West Philippine Sea shall be entitled to a hazard pay, the amount or rate of which shall be set by the government agencies mentioned in Section 3 of this Act.

The hazard pay to be granted to civilian employees under this Act shall:

- a) Be in addition to the basic salary, subsistence allowance, and other benefits provided under existing laws;
- b) Be computed based on the number of days of actual exposure to hazardous duty; and
- c) Not be subject to reduction of existing allowances or benefits.

The Department of Budget and Management, in coordination with the Department of National Defense, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Civil Service Commission, and other government agencies concerned, may periodically review and recommend adjustments to the hazard pay rate to account for inflation, operational risk, and other relevant factors.

SECTION 5. *Eligibility.* Civilian personnel shall be eligible for hazard pay if they:

- a) Are physically deployed to vessels, maritime stations, or facilities operating within the West Philippine Sea;
- b) Perform duties related to maritime patrol support, monitoring, fisheries enforcement, logistics, scientific research, or technical operations; or
- c) Are exposed to hazardous maritime conditions or security threats in the performance of their official duties.

SECTION 6. *Additional Benefits.* In addition to hazard pay, covered personnel may be entitled to:

- a) Insurance coverage for injury, disability, or death incurred during deployment;
- b) Medical and psychological services;
- c) Emergency evacuation and transportation support; and
- d) Training on maritime safety, emergency preparedness, and crisis response.

SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the concerned agencies in the current fiscal year. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of National Defense, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management, the Civil Service Commission, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

1 **SECTION 10.** *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
2 regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

3
4 **SECTION 11.** *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
5 in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,