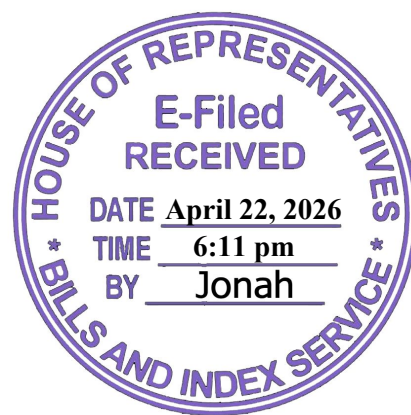


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8955



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to strengthen the protection of agricultural workers and their families from the health and environmental hazards arising from pesticide use in agricultural sites. The duty of the State to protect the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology, extends to the millions of Filipinos whose livelihoods depend on agriculture. As one of the country's largest employment sectors, agriculture sustains a significant portion of the population, making the safety and welfare of farm workers a matter of national concern.

Despite existing government programs that support farmers through equipment, training, and research, protection in actual farm working conditions remain inadequate, particularly in areas where pesticides are heavily used. International and local studies have long documented the prevalence of unintentional pesticide poisoning worldwide, resulting in serious illness and thousands of deaths annually.

Many farmers and farm workers also lack sufficient knowledge on the proper use, handling, and disposal of pesticides. These conditions endanger not only workers but also their families through secondary exposure in homes and communities.

This measure therefore establishes concrete obligations for farm owners and operators to adopt safety standards that reduce pesticide-related risks, ensure early detection of exposure, and promote awareness and accountability. By prioritizing the health and dignity of agricultural workers and their families, the bill places their welfare at the forefront of public service and recognizes their indispensable role in sustaining the nation's food security.

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


HON. ERIC G. YAP

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8955**

Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING A UNIFIED NATIONAL EMERGENCY HOTLINE
“911” AS THE NATIONWIDE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY, PROVIDING ITS FRAMEWORK AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*National Emergency Hotline Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to maintain peace and order, ensure the safety and security of its citizens, and protect its people through a unified and efficient emergency response system. To this end, the State shall institutionalize a national emergency hotline, “911”, to enhance public order and safety throughout the country.

SEC. 3. *Institutionalization of “911” as the National Emergency Hotline.* –

a. The telephone number “911” is hereby designated as the only national emergency hotline which shall be available nationwide for landline and wireless telephone systems;

b. There shall be a “911” Emergency and Public Safety Response Center, hereinafter referred to as Call Center, in every region, province, city and municipality nationwide. The local government units (LGU) are enjoined to establish and run local 911 call centers within their area of jurisdiction which shall be under the supervision of the National Development Office;

c. All calls received through the “911” National Emergency Program shall be recorded, monitored, and reviewed by the 911 National Development Office and shall be monitored through a Global Positioning System (GPS) to aid in the accurate and timely dispatch of emergency services;

d. All information and data gathered through the “911” National Emergency Hotline shall be processed and protected in accordance with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the “*Data Privacy Act of 2012*”, and other existing laws;

e. A call made to the “911” National Emergency Hotline constitutes consent by the caller for the distress call to be recorded and may be used as evidence to prosecute against illegitimate calls;

f. The “911” hotline shall be connected to major service responders including, but not limited to:

1. The Philippine National Police (PNP);
2. The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP);
3. The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP);
4. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA);
5. The National Bureau of Investigation;
6. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC);
7. Philippine Coast Guard (PCG);
8. Local Government Units (LGUs);
9. Bureau of Immigration (BI);
10. The Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA);
11. Other government agencies such as the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Department of Justice (DOJ); and
12. Accredited non-government organizations (NGOs) such as hospitals, medical facilities and safety volunteers.

g. The creation of Emergency and Public Safety Response Centers shall anchor on the mandatory participation of existing primary communication carriers operating nationwide and in each locality;

h. All private communication carriers and telecommunications companies shall ensure and provide uninterrupted connectivity and integration of all calls made by their subscribers to the “911” National Emergency Hotline;

i. In areas where an emergency telephone number does not yet exist, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall immediately direct the concerned telephone companies to designate “911” as the nationwide emergency telephone number within a reasonable period of time. Any emergency hotline established by any local government unit or state agency using a number other than “911” shall be changed to “911”; and

j. All existing agreements in connection with the effective operation of Hotline “911” with the private sector and the NGOs prior to the enactment of this law shall continue to be enforced.

SEC. 4. *Creation of the “911” Hotline Commission.* – There is hereby created a “911” Hotline Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, which shall serve as the policy-making body and overseer of the Emergency 911 National Program and shall be composed of the following members:

a. Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) as Chairperson;

b. Secretary of the Department of National Defense (DND), as Co-Chairperson;

c. Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) as Vice-Chairperson;

d. Representatives of the following government agencies and offices with a rank not lower than Director IV or its equivalent, as members:

i. NDRRMC;

ii. DSWD;

iii. DOH;

iv. NTC;

v. MMDA; and

vi. PNP.

e. Two (2) other members with a term of two (2) years, to be selected by the Chairperson from the private sector, upon recommendation of the Commission.

SEC. 5. *Functions of the Commission.* – The following are the functions of the 911 Hotline Commission:

- a. Provide policy direction and formulate necessary guidelines in the implementation and supervision of the Emergency 911 National Program;
- b. Prepare and recommend policies and solutions that are responsive to crime prevention, public order and public safety;
- c. Submit an annual report to Congress and the President on the implementation of the Emergency 911 National Program; and
- d. Perform such other duties as the President may direct.

SEC. 6. *The "911" National Development Office.* – The existing DILG Hotline "117" Development Group, activated by the DILG under the PATROL "117" Commission is hereby institutionalized as the Hotline "911" National Development Office.

Under the direction of the Commission, the "911" National Development Office shall function as the primary implementing office of the Emergency 911 National Program.

It shall serve as the Secretariat of the "911" Hotline Commission which shall consist of existing uniformed personnel of the interior sector and the non-uniformed Plantilla personnel of the PATROL "117" Commission.

It shall be headed by a Director with an equivalent position of Director IV, to be appointed by the President, upon the recommendation by the Secretary of DILG, subject to civil service rules and regulations. It shall have parallel offices in the regional level to be headed by a regional officer and in the field level to monitor provincial, city and municipal operations.

SEC. 7. *Functions of the "911" National Development Office.* – The Emergency "911" National Development Office shall have the following functions:

- a. Act as the Secretariat of the Commission;
- b. Serve as the primary implementing arm of the Commission in carrying out the objectives of this Act;
- c. Institutionalize localized networks of service responders upon the direction of the Commission;
- d. Conduct reviews and readiness tests, and monitor and evaluate the response capabilities of various aspects of the Emergency 911 National Program;
- e. Conduct reviews and monitor calls received by Emergency and Public Safety Response Centers nationwide;

f. Develop and implement training programs for emergency communications personnel and responders;

g. Process accreditation of NGOs, hospital and medical institutions and facilities, and other civic sector institutions, facilities, and volunteers in line with the objectives of this Act; and

h. Undertake such other duties as the Emergency 911 Commission may direct.

SEC. 8. *Free Service to the Calling Public.* – The Commission shall ensure that all calls made to the “911” National Emergency Hotline shall be free of charge and other fees.

SEC. 9. *Involvement of Other Government Agencies.* – All government agencies are stakeholders in the promotion of peace and order and public safety. They shall provide the necessary support in the implementation of the program with the Secretary of Interior and Local Government as the lead coordinator.

SEC. 10. *Participation of the Public Sector.* – The private sector and NGOs are enjoined to actively participate in whatever capacity in advocating crime prevention and public safety by supporting Hotline “911”.

SEC. 11. *Penalties for Illegitimate “911” Calls.* – A call shall be deemed illegitimate when a person accesses the “911” National Emergency Hotline for the following purposes:

- a. Making a prank call;
- b. Cause a false alarm, disorder, or unrest to the public;
- c. Making deceitful complaints or giving false information; or
- d. Harassing emergency responders by using obscene, vulgar or profane language which interferes or disrupts the emergency telephone service;

For this purpose, a false report shall mean the fabrication of an incident or alleged crime which the person making the report knows to be false at the time of making said report.

Any person found to guilty under this provision shall be punished as follows:

1. First offense, a fine of Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00);
2. Second offense, a fine of Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00), or imprisonment of Arresto Menor;

3. Third offense, a fine of Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00), or imprisonment of Arresto Mayor; and

4. For succeeding offenses, a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00), or imprisonment of Prision Correccional.

The foregoing shall be without prejudice to any other liability or penalty that may be imposed arising from existing laws.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* - The amount needed for the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current year's appropriations of the DILG. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - DILG, as the lead agency, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, decrees, executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations, or part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby likewise repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* - If, for any reason, any section or provisions of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,