



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9141



INTRODUCED BY REP. JOSE "BONG" J. TEVES, JR.

AN ACT
CREATING A SYSTEM FOR TIMELY AND SCIENTIFIC-BASED
CANCELLATION OF CLASSES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

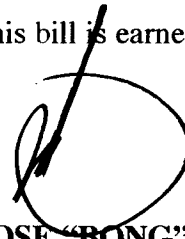
The Philippines experiences the rainy season or the *la niña* season from June to October and sometimes extends until November of every year and during these times, cancellation of classes due to typhoon, heavy rain, and flood are very often. Aside from the rainy season, we also experience high summer heat and other types of natural occurrence which may expose our students to various kinds of safety hazards. However, there is no centralized system or guidelines as to when announce the cancellation of classes in their areas of responsibility.

For instance, some local government units announce the cancellation of classes late despite prior advisory of weather conditions from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). This practice exposes the students to safety hazards brought about by the heavy rain or flood, especially when the student has already left for school.

Thus, to address this concern and to prevent the students from such risks, this proposed measure seeks to create a system for timely and scientific-based cancellation of classes in which the local government units, national government agencies, and other stakeholders shall abide.

This is in consonance with Section 5, Article II of the 1987 Constitution which provides for the State to protect the life and to promote the general welfare of its citizens.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'T' followed by a large circular flourish, positioned above the printed name.

HON. JOSE "BONG" J. TEVES, JR.
Representative, TGP Party-List



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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 “Science-Based Class Suspension Act”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared as policy of the State that the paramount concern of the government during typhoon and intense heat is the safety and well-being of its citizens especially the students while ensuring the continuity of education.

Further, in order to avoid confusion among parents, students, and local government units, and to safeguard the teachers and students during weather disturbances or typhoon, a systematic plan shall be formulated to guide the stakeholders in determining the cancellation of classes in public and private schools.

SECTION 3. *Establishment of a National Class Suspension Framework.* – A National Framework for Science-Based Class Suspension is hereby established to provide uniform, timely, and data-driven guidelines for the suspension of classes in all public and private schools.

The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), in consultation the local government units, and other stakeholders shall formulate and develop and implement this framework.

Further: The guidelines shall be based on the existing Tropical Cyclone Wind Signals and Rainfall and Flood Warning system of PAGASA.

Furthermore: The cancellation of classes initiated by the local government unit shall be announced at least three (3) hours before the start of classes. This is to minimize the risk of students from being stranded due to possible flood in the area.

SECTION 4. *Standardized Criteria for Class Suspension.* – The framework shall include:

- a. Clearly defined thresholds based on scientific data, including but not limited to:
 1. Tropical cyclone wind signals issued by PAGASA;
 2. Rainfall warnings and flood advisories;
 3. Heat index levels;
 4. Air quality levels;
 5. Earthquake intensity levels and aftershock risks; and
 6. Public health indicators such as epidemic or outbreak alerts from the Department of Health.
- b. Automatic suspension triggers based on pre-determined thresholds; and
- c. Guidelines for partial, localized, or nationwide class suspensions.

SECTION 5. *Authority to Declare Class Suspensions.* – Consistent with existing laws and regulations, the following are authorized to declare class suspensions:

1. The President of the Republic of the Philippines;
2. Local Chief Executives may declare suspensions within their jurisdictions based on the established framework; and
3. School heads may suspend classes in cases of imminent danger, subject to immediate reporting to local authorities.

SECTION 6. *Timeliness and Advance Notice.* – All announcements of class suspensions shall, as far as practicable, be made no later than:

- a. 10:00 P.M. of the preceding day for next-day suspensions; or
- b. At least three (3) hours before the start of classes in case of sudden developments

SECTION 7. *Integrated Information and Alert System.* – An integrated, multi-platform alert system shall be established to disseminate class suspension announcement through:

- a. Television and radio broadcasts;
- b. Official government websites and social media platforms;
- c. Mobile alert and text message notifications;
- d. Coordination with local government units and school administrations.

SECTION 8. *Continuity of Learning.* – The DepEd, CHED, and TESDA shall ensure that appropriate alternative delivery modes, including distance learning, modular instructions, or make-up classes, are implemented during suspensions

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, in consultation with PAGASA, DOH, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, and the stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary guidelines for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the validity of other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, other issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,