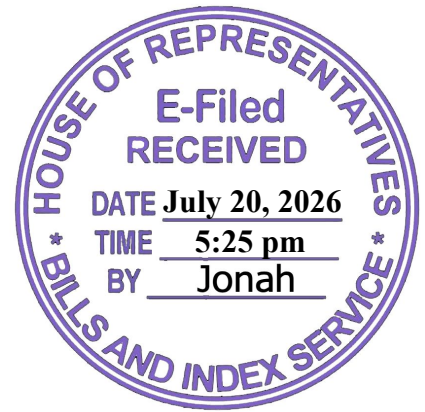


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan, Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress

Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10129



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Marine pollution caused by untreated sewage discharge from ships and floating facilities poses a serious threat to the Philippines' coastal waters, fisheries, and public health. The country, being an archipelagic state with one of the largest maritime jurisdictions in the world, is highly vulnerable to the cumulative effects of ship-generated waste. While the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has issued Memorandum Circulars, including Circular No. 10-14 (2014) and the updated Circular No. 03-25 (2025), compliance remains inconsistent, and enforcement mechanisms require stronger legislative backing.

International conventions such as MARPOL Annex IV, together with domestic laws including Republic Act No. 9275 (Philippine Clean Water Act), Republic Act No. 9993 (Philippine Coast Guard Law), and Republic Act No. 12064 (Philippine Maritime Zones Act), already provide a framework for sewage management. However, without institutionalized penalties, monitoring systems, and clear authority vested in the PCG, ship operators often evade responsibility, resulting in untreated sewage being discharged into Philippine waters until now.

This bill seeks to institutionalize the compliance, monitoring, and penal provisions for sewage treatment and disposal in Philippine-registered vessels. It strengthens the enforcement powers of the PCG by authorizing stop-sail orders, suspension of accreditation, and denial of departure clearance for non-compliant vessels. It also mandates MARINA to integrate sewage compliance into vessel registration, DENR to oversee effluent testing through accredited laboratories, and DOH to certify sewage treatment facilities and personnel training.

By imposing stricter fines, requiring regular inspections, and establishing a Marine Sewage Compliance Database, this measure ensures transparency, accountability, and deterrence against violations. It also aligns Philippine maritime practices with international standards, thereby protecting marine biodiversity, sustaining fisheries, and safeguarding the health of our coastal communities.

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

JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'R' followed by a large loop.

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE COMPLIANCE, MONITORING, AND PENAL
PROVISIONS FOR SEWAGE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL IN PHILIPPINE-
REGISTERED VESSELS, STRENGTHENING THE POWERS OF THE PHILIPPINE
COAST GUARD, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “**Philippine Ship Sewage Compliance and Enforcement Act of 2026.**”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to protect the marine environment and public health by ensuring strict compliance with international and domestic standards on sewage management from Philippine registered vessels, all fixed or floating platforms, offshore platforms, floating crafts and floating facilities.

The State recognizes the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) as the primary enforcement agency in preventing sewage pollution, in coordination with the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the Department of Health (DOH).

SEC. 3. Coverage. - This Act shall apply to all Philippine-registered vessels of four hundred gross tonnage and above, vessels below four hundred gross tonnages certified to carry fifteen or more passengers, fixed or floating platforms, offshore facilities, and for accredited sewage collectors.

SEC. 4. Mandatory Requirements. - All covered vessels shall be fitted with sewage treatment plants, holding tanks, or other approved marine sanitation devices and appropriately approved related equipment. Effluent discharged from such systems shall conform to internationally recognized standards, including coliform counts not exceeding one hundred MPN per one hundred milliliters, biochemical oxygen demand not exceeding twenty-five milligrams per liter, and total suspended solids not exceeding thirty-five milligrams per liter.

Vessels shall maintain a duly registered Sewage Discharge Record Book, properly accomplished and available for inspection. Sewage collectors accredited by the PCG shall submit monthly reports to both the Coast Guard and DENR detailing the quantity and type of waste collected and treated.

SEC. 5. Monitoring and Enforcement. - The PCG shall conduct annual and random surprise inspections of vessels and port facilities, and shall exercise authority to issue stop-sail orders, suspend or revoke sewage collector accreditation, and deny departure clearance to vessels found non-compliant.

MARINA shall integrate sewage compliance into vessel registration and dry-docking requirements. Failure to do so shall result to non-issuance of the requisite Certificate of Public Convenience and permits.

DENR shall oversee effluent testing through accredited laboratories, while DOH shall certify sewage treatment facilities and ensure the appropriate training of personnel engaged in sewage collection and disposal to issue proper management and handling of this facility and sewage disposal.

SEC. 6. Incident Reporting, Sampling, and Testing. - Any malfunction, leakage, bypass, overflow, suspected illegal discharge, or failure of a sewage treatment plant, holding tank, or related equipment shall be immediately reported by the shipowner, operator, master, or accredited sewage collector to the PCG and MARINA. **Failure to report such incident within twenty-four (24) hours from its occurrence shall constitute a violation of this Act and shall subject the liable shipowner, operator, master, or accredited sewage collector to an administrative fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000.00), and/or the suspension or revocation of the vessel's Authority to Operate (ATO), Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC), or the collector's accreditation, without prejudice to other civil or criminal liabilities under existing laws.**

The PCG, DENR, or their authorized representatives may take water samples, sewage samples, photographs, videos, records, and other evidence necessary to determine compliance with this Act. Laboratory testing shall be conducted by DENR-accredited or government-recognized laboratories. Test results, inspection findings, and discharge records may be used as basis for compliance orders, stop-sail orders, penalties, suspension, or other enforcement action under this Act.

SEC. 7. Inspection and Monitoring Unit. – The PCG shall hire qualified personnel that has the appropriate training that will handle the inspection and monitoring

1 of all vessels covered under this Act. These personnel shall be deployed in all regional
2 offices and in such areas with high vessel traffic.

3 The budgetary requirements for this unit will be included in the Personnel Services
4 of the PCG in their annual budget.

5 **SEC. 8. Penalties.** - Violations of this Act shall carry administrative fines of one
6 hundred thousand pesos per day for first offenses, automatically adjusted by ten percent
7 every three years to account for inflation.

8 Provided, however, for repeat violations, it shall incur fines of up to five hundred thousand
9 pesos per day, together with revocation of accreditation and denial of renewal. These
10 penalties shall be without prejudice to other sanctions under existing laws. The imposition
11 of administrative penalties shall likewise serve as grounds for the non-issuance of
12 departure clearance for vessels until compliance is achieved.

13 **SEC. 9. Strengthening PCG Powers.** - The PCG shall establish and maintain a
14 Marine Sewage Compliance Database, accessible to regulators and the public, to ensure
15 transparency and accountability in enforcement. It shall be empowered to coordinate with
16 MARINA, DENR, and DOH for integrated enforcement, and to exercise expanded
17 authority in the inspection, certification, and sanctioning of vessels and sewage operators.
18 It shall coordinate with concerned local government units to determine compliance and
19 encourage their participation in monitoring those vessels plying the routes of their LGU's.
20 The PCG shall continue to improve and update existing standards compliant with
21 international conventions like the MARPOL 73/78, existing laws, and policies.

22 **SEC. 10. Appropriations.** - Funding requirements necessary for the
23 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

24 **SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within ninety (90) days from the
25 effectivity of this Act, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), in coordination with the
26 Department of Transportation (DOTr), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), and the
27 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), shall promulgate the
28 necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

29 **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared
30 unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected and shall remain
31 in full force and effect.

32 **SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, and circulars inconsistent with this
33 Act, including PCG Memorandum Circular No. 10-14, are hereby repealed.

34 **SEC. 13. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen days after its publication in a
35 newspaper of general circulation.

36 **Approved.**