

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City  
TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
Second Regular Session  
**HOUSE BILL NO. 10619**



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Introduced by: **REP. ELMER V. CATULPOS**  
(1Tahanan Partylist)

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

On June 8, 2026, at the height of an ordinary day, the ground beneath General Santos City began to move. This Representation was there. For those long seconds of the magnitude 7.8 earthquake off Sarangani, there was nothing to hold on to that was not itself shaking — and when the shaking stopped, the streets filled with families who all carried, in different words, a single question as they stared up at their own homes, their children's schools, their places of work: *Ligtas pa ba kami dito?* Are we still safe here?

The honest answer of the Republic to that question, today, is this: we cannot tell them. We cannot tell them, for three reasons. First, our National Building Code — Presidential Decree No. 1096 — was framed in 1977 on an assumption we now know to be false: that one set of requirements can answer for an archipelago where one province lies in the path of the world's strongest typhoons and another sits quietly outside them; where one city is built beside a trench and another stands on stable ground. Second, the hazard maps of our own scientists — the most advanced our country has ever had — are not wired into the permit system that decides what gets built and where. And third, the buildings already standing — the schools, hospitals, offices, and homes in which Filipinos actually live out their days — have, in the vast majority, never once been re-examined against what we now know of the ground beneath them.

On May 25, 2026, a building collapsed in Angeles City, Pampanga. It was a building with papers. Its documents said it was safe; the ground said it was not. This measure does not fault any single official or signatory — it faults the system that made such a contradiction possible: a one-size-fits-all code that cannot see the ground, a permit process that does not read the hazard map, and a discretion at the local level that can be pressured, purchased, or simply mistaken. *Hindi binabasa ng lindol ang permit; binabasa nito ang lupa.* An earthquake does not read the permit; it reads the ground. The law must therefore be rewritten so that the permit and the ground finally say the same thing.

And the ground keeps reminding us that it will not wait for our deliberations. On the night of July 29, 2026 — two days after the State of the Nation Address — a magnitude 5.6 earthquake off Jomalig, Quezon shook homes as far as Metro Manila; one hour later, a magnitude 5.3 struck off Catanduanes; and our seismologists once more warned the nation against complacency. Every tremor is the same question asked again — *Ligtas pa ba kami dito?* — and every day this measure waits, the Republic still cannot answer.

The first pillar of this bill is differentiation. Our archipelago does not face one danger; it faces many, distributed unevenly. A uniform national standard commits a double injustice: it under-protects the family in the typhoon corridor and on the fault line, and it overtaxes the family in the sheltered zone — forcing them to pay for fortifications against dangers their ground does not carry. That wasted cost is not abstract: every peso spent over-building where the hazard is low is a peso that could have built more homes for more families where they are needed. This bill therefore mandates structural resilience zones that are location-specific, granular, and continuously updated by our scientific agencies — because the map of danger itself is changing, as Mindanao learned when storms the old maps never promised arrived all the same. And beneath all differentiation, the bill fixes a national minimum floor below which no zone may ever fall: differentiation shall calibrate protection, never dilute it.

The second pillar answers the hardest dilemma this Representation has seen at home. After June 8, areas of General Santos City — including portions of its central business district and its most densely populated communities — stand identified as prone to liquefaction. For the owners of those lands and buildings, a hazard classification can read like a sentence of ruin: property held for a lifetime, rendered unsellable by a line on a map. And where a classification means ruin, a dangerous temptation is born — the pressure, upon whichever office holds the discretion, to soften the finding, to quiet the map, so that the property may still be sold. This bill answers that dilemma with engineering and with honesty, not with concealment. Liquefaction-prone does not mean unbuildable: the science of ground improvement and deep foundations — proven in Japan, in New Zealand, in every earthquake country that chose to build correctly rather than pretend — allows safe construction on such ground. The rule this bill writes is therefore not “*bawal magtayo*” but “*magtayo nang tama*”: in identified hazard areas, a permit requires a geotechnical investigation and the foundation engineering that the ground actually demands. Only the narrowest zones that science itself declares unbuildable — the surface trace of an active fault — carry a true setback.

The third pillar makes the finding itself incorruptible. Under this bill, the hazard classification of any parcel of land is no longer a matter of local discretion: it is the National Geohazard Determination — the official, published, digital hazard maps of PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, accessible to any citizen with a mobile phone — automatically integrated into the permit system. The Office of the Building Official does not “find” whether a lot is in a liquefaction zone; the national map says so, publicly, and what remains to be verified locally is only whether the engineering answers the hazard.

Whoever falsifies, softens, or overrides that determination — official or professional — commits a specific crime under this Act. Ang mapa ay hindi masusuhulan. The map cannot be bribed. In an hour when the nation is confronting, at the President's own instance, the deadly cost of corruption in public construction, this bill offers the simplest anti-corruption mechanism ever written into a building law: remove the discretion, and the bribe has nothing left to buy.

But honest ground and honest design can still be betrayed by one last lie: the material itself. The most faithful map and the most rigorous computation mean nothing if the reinforcing bar inside the column is sub-standard steel that snaps where seismic-grade steel bends. The Republic has already seen the answer take shape: this May, the Bureau of Philippine Standards issued updated seismic-grade steel standards — yet they remain voluntary, awaiting a department order; and a department order, however welcome, can be quietly revised by any future administration. Elsewhere in our region, governments have banned sub-standard reinforcing steel from public works outright. This bill therefore completes the triangle of honesty in statute: tapat na lupa, tapat na disenyo, tapat na bakal — mandatory compliance with the Philippine National Standards for structural materials in every building and every public project, with fair transition support for domestic producers, so that the standard that keeps Filipinos alive never again depends on the signature of a single secretary.

To the landowners and building owners of the identified hazard areas — in General Santos City and in every city like it — this bill comes not as a punishment upon property but as the rescue of its value. Hindi bulong at lagay ang magliligtas sa halaga ng lupa, kundi katotohanan at inhinyeriya. It is not whispers and grease money that will save the value of land, but truth and engineering. A concealed hazard poisons an entire district's worth the moment it is exposed — and it is always, eventually, exposed, at the cost of lives. A declared hazard with a lawful engineering path preserves use, preserves commerce, and preserves value. This bill therefore pairs its requirements with a transition of compassion: financing windows through government banks and Pag-IBIG for ground improvement and retrofit, tax deductions for hazard-compliance investments, phased compliance periods, and technical assistance — so that no owner faces the truth of the ground alone.

The fourth pillar is memory. Ang panganib sa susunod na malakas na lindol ay hindi nasa mga gusaling itatayo pa lamang — kundi nasa mga nakatayo na. At narito ang mabuting balita: ang nakatayo pa ay maaari pang patibayin. In the next great earthquake, the danger will lie not in the buildings yet to be built under new rules, but in those already standing under old ones — and here is the good news the Republic has never acted on: what still stands can still be strengthened. This bill therefore institutes the National Building Resilience Assessment and Retrofit Program for the existing building stock in high-hazard zones — beginning where the stakes are most innocent: the public schools, then the hospitals, then the evacuation centers that must not fail on the very day they are needed. It is the natural

companion of this Representation's school-safety agenda: the same child we guard at the school gate must be able to trust the school's very walls.

The Republic must be equally honest with its own money. Today, the government designs and estimates its buildings, roads, and bridges on largely uniform standards and unit costs — as if a school in the typhoon corridor and a school on sheltered ground were the same project. That uniformity commits two sins at once: it quietly under-builds where the hazard is greatest, because the honest cost of resilience does not fit the standard estimate; and it gives padded costing a place to hide, because a price detached from place cannot be audited against the ground it stands on. This bill directs that all government infrastructure be designed and costed according to the hazard of its location, with the resilience premium shown openly as a line item — funded, never value-engineered away. And where an area is high in hazard but rich in promise — as the cities of Mindanao have proven themselves to be — the premium is not a burden to avoid but an investment the Republic proudly makes: *dahil ang lugar na sulit ipaglaban ay sulit ding paglaanan*.

Finally, the same map must govern not only what we build, but where our cities plan to grow. The State already possesses, in scattered archives, the terrain of the entire nation — the LIDAR elevation surveys of our science agencies, the floodplain maps, the traced paths of natural waterways — yet cities still approve land use plans and zoning that send families onto floodways and fault lines the data had long revealed. This bill consolidates those datasets into the same national platform and makes them a mandatory basis for the formulation and approval of every local land use plan and zoning ordinance — the hazard layer of planning, and only the hazard layer, for this measure deliberately touches no question of land classification or conversion. In this, the bill honors and prepares for the proposed National Land Use Act, which this House has now passed in two successive Congresses: when that landmark measure becomes law, the data spine built here will be ready to serve its national framework from the first day.

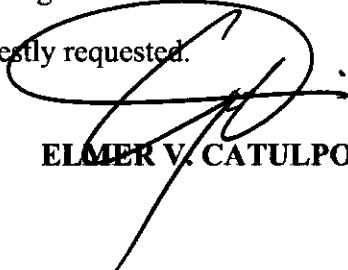
This measure honors, and deliberately completes, the work of colleagues. The House of Representatives has passed the proposed New Philippine Building Act, now pending in the Senate, and Senator Rafael Tulfo has filed his own measure to replace the 1977 Code; the Department of Public Works and Highways is likewise reviewing the Code's implementing rules. This Representation supports those efforts without reservation. They write the new rules for tomorrow's buildings; this bill answers for the buildings our children are sitting in today. It contributes the three elements no pending measure yet supplies: the number — a defined resilience benchmark for the buildings that must never fail; the map — a hazard determination that no office can soften; and the memory — the retrofit of what is already built. Its provisions are drafted to stand alone under the present Code and to dock, intact, into any general building law that Congress may enact. And to the three it contributes — the number, the map, and the memory — this measure, in its fuller form, now adds three more:

honest materials in every column, honest costing in every government estimate, and honest hazard data in every city's plan.

The direction of this bill is the President's own. In his State of the Nation Address of July 27, 2026, the President called for the amendment of the National Building Code to bring our construction requirements in line with modern standards — and, in the same Address, announced the Ligtas Pinoy Centers: evacuation buildings engineered to withstand three hundred forty (340) kilometer-per-hour super typhoon winds and a magnitude 8.4 earthquake, rising first in the most disaster-prone provinces. That announcement fixed, in the President's own words, the Republic's benchmark for a building meant to keep Filipinos alive. This bill takes that same benchmark and extends it to the buildings where Filipinos already live, learn, and heal — so that the standard of survival is not reserved for the building families run to, but built into the ones they run from.

Every Filipino sleeps, works, studies, and prays inside a promise made by a building — the promise that it will hold. For forty-nine years we have let that promise rest on a law that cannot see the ground. This bill makes the promise true: para sa batang nasa silid-aralan, sa pamilyang natutulog sa ikalawang palapag, sa may-ari ng lupang nais magpatayo nang tama, at sa lungsod na minsan nang nayanig — at ayaw nang maulit.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this Bill is earnestly requested.



**ELMER V. CATULPOS**

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **10619**

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Introduced by: REP. ELMER V. CATULPOS  
(*1Tahanan Partylist*)

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RISK-BASED AND LOCATION-SPECIFIC  
FRAMEWORK OF STRUCTURAL RESILIENCE STANDARDS,  
INTEGRATING NATIONAL GEOHAZARD DETERMINATIONS INTO  
THE BUILDING PERMIT SYSTEM, INSTITUTING A NATIONAL  
PROGRAM FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND RETROFIT OF EXISTING  
BUILDINGS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL  
DECREE NO. 1096, AS AMENDED, PROVIDING HAZARD-RESPONSIVE  
DESIGN AND COST STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE,  
INTEGRATING HAZARD DATA INTO LAND USE PLANNING, ENSURING  
THE INTEGRITY OF STRUCTURAL MATERIALS, AND  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**ARTICLE I — GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Section 1. Short Title.** — This Act shall be known and cited as the “Ligtas na Gusali Act,” or the “Resilient Buildings Act of 2026.”

**Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** — It is the policy of the State to protect life and property against natural hazards through building standards that are truthful to the ground on which Filipinos build. The State recognizes that the hazards of the Philippine archipelago are real, scientifically knowable, and unevenly distributed — and declares that structural requirements shall be calibrated to the actual hazard of each location: subject to a guaranteed national minimum standard and to the technical requirements applicable to the use, occupancy, importance, and vulnerability of the structure. The State further declares that the determination of natural hazard shall be a function of science, published for all to see, and used as the controlling scientific basis of building-permit review, subject to a transparent procedure for scientific correction or site-specific review; that land burdened by hazard shall be answered with engineering and support, not concealment; and that the safety of buildings already standing is as solemn a duty of the State as the regulation of buildings yet to rise.

**Section 3. Objectives.** — This Act shall have the following objectives:

- (a) To establish location-specific, risk-based structural resilience zones, continuously updated by the State's scientific agencies, over a guaranteed national minimum standard;
- (b) To fix a defined resilience benchmark for critical-use buildings in high-hazard zones, adopting the performance standard set by the National Government for its own evacuation infrastructure;

- (c) To integrate the official geohazard determinations of the national scientific agencies directly and automatically into the building permit system, eliminating local discretion over hazard classification;
- (d) To enable safe construction and rebuilding in liquefaction-prone and other hazard areas through mandatory geotechnical investigation and engineering, supported by financing and incentives, in place of concealment or blanket prohibition;
- (e) To institute a national program for the assessment and retrofit of existing buildings in high-hazard zones, beginning with public schools, hospitals, and evacuation facilities; and
- (f) To impose clear accountability, including criminal liability, upon any person — official or professional — who knowingly falsifies, materially misrepresents, or intentionally manipulates an official hazard determination or the engineering response required by this Act.

**Section 4. Scope and Application.** — This Act shall apply to the design, permitting, construction, occupancy, alteration, and retrofit of all buildings and structures in the Philippines. It amends and supplements Presidential Decree No. 1096, as amended, and shall likewise apply, *mutatis mutandis*, under any subsequent general law governing buildings, into which its provisions shall be deemed integrated unless expressly repealed.

**Section 5. Definition of Terms.** — As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) **Structural Resilience Zone** refers to a geographic zone established under Section 6, defining the seismic and wind design forces applicable therein;
- (b) **National Geohazard Determination** refers to the official hazard classification of any location as published in the integrated digital hazard maps and assessment platforms of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), through the GeoRisk Philippines initiative or its successor platform, including the Flood and Terrain Hazard Layers under paragraph (l);
- (c) **Liquefaction-Prone Area** refers to an area classified under the National Geohazard Determination as susceptible to soil liquefaction during seismic events;
- (d) **Active Fault Setback** refers to the buffer distance from the surface trace of an active fault, as prescribed by PHIVOLCS, within which the construction of occupied structures is prohibited;
- (e) **Critical-Use Building** refers to any public or private school building, hospital or health facility, evacuation center, and disaster operations or command facility;
- (f) **Ligtas Resilience Benchmark** refers to the structural performance standard under Section 9;
- (g) **Geotechnical Investigation** refers to the subsurface investigation and analysis of soil conditions of a site, conducted and certified by an Accredited Geotechnical Professional;
- (h) **Accredited Geotechnical Professional** refers to a licensed civil engineer accredited under Section 15;
- (i) **Retrofit** refers to structural intervention upon an existing building to bring its performance toward the standard applicable to its zone and use;
- (j) **Referral Codes** refers to the engineering codes adopted under the National Building Code, including the National Structural Code of the Philippines (NSCP);
- (k) **Building Official** refers to the official exercising the functions defined under Presidential Decree No. 1096, as amended;
- (l) **Flood and Terrain Hazard Layers** refers to the elevation, floodplain, flood-susceptibility, and natural waterway datasets of the government, including the LIDAR-derived surveys of the Department of Science and Technology and its programs, the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, the MGB, and PAGASA, as consolidated into the platform under Section 11;
- (m) **Philippine National Standards (PNS)** refers to the standards promulgated by the Bureau of Philippine Standards of the Department of Trade and Industry, including the standards for seismic-grade reinforcing steel and other structural materials;

(n) **Resilience Premium** refers to the incremental cost of hazard-responsive design and construction under Section 20.

## **ARTICLE II — RISK-BASED, LOCATION-SPECIFIC RESILIENCE STANDARDS**

**Section 6. Structural Resilience Zoning.** — The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), upon the determinations of PHIVOLCS for seismic hazard and PAGASA for wind hazard, and in consultation with the accredited professional organizations of civil and structural engineering, shall establish Structural Resilience Zones covering the entire territory of the Philippines. The zones shall be granular to at least the city and municipal level, and finer where the underlying hazard data permit. The seismic and wind design forces applicable to each zone shall be prescribed through the Referral Codes, which shall give effect to this Section.

**Section 7. National Minimum Standard.** — No Structural Resilience Zone shall prescribe design requirements below the national minimum standard fixed in the Referral Codes pursuant to this Act. Zoning under this Act shall calibrate protection to hazard; it shall in no case be construed or implemented to reduce protection below the national minimum, nor to justify the degradation of existing standards in any zone.

**Section 8. Mandatory Scientific Updating.** — The Structural Resilience Zones and the National Geohazard Determination shall be reviewed and updated: (a) at least once every *five (5) years*; (b) within *one (1) year* following any earthquake of magnitude 7.0 or higher affecting Philippine territory, or any tropical cyclone exceeding the design wind speeds of the affected zone; and (c) whenever new scientific findings of PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, or the MGB materially alter the assessed hazard of any area, including hazard changes attributable to climate change. Updated zones and determinations shall take effect upon publication and shall be given effect in the Referral Codes within the period fixed by the implementing rules. No administrative inaction shall suspend the effectivity of a published scientific update.

**Section 9. The Ligtas Resilience Benchmark for Critical-Use Buildings.** — All Critical-Use Buildings to be constructed in zones classified as high seismic hazard shall be designed to a structural performance objective equivalent to withstanding a magnitude 8.4 earthquake, and those in zones classified as high wind hazard, to a design wind speed of three hundred forty (340) kilometers per hour — the same performance standard adopted by the National Government for the Ligtas Pinoy evacuation centers. The Referral Codes shall translate this benchmark into the corresponding engineering design parameters within the period under Section 24.

**Section 10. Cost-Proportionality.** — It is the intent of this Act that in zones of lower assessed hazard, buildings shall not be required to bear the cost of design forces their location does not carry, subject always to the national minimum standard. Savings realized through proportionate design in low-hazard zones are declared to serve the State's housing production objectives under existing housing laws. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to authorize the reduction of requirements based on building use, occupancy, importance, fire safety, accessibility, public health, or other applicable standards.

## **ARTICLE III — GEOHAZARD-INTEGRATED PERMITTING**

**Section 11. Controlling Effect of the National Geohazard Determination.** — The National Geohazard Determination shall be the sole and controlling determination of the natural-hazard classification of any location for all purposes of building permitting under this Act and the National Building Code. It shall be published, kept current, and made freely accessible to the public in digital form. No Building Official, local ordinance, or administrative issuance may alter, soften, override, or disregard the National Geohazard Determination of any location. Any person may verify the Determination applicable to any parcel through the public platform.

**Site-Specific Scientific Review.** Any owner of real property may petition for the site-specific review of the Determination applicable to that property, on the basis of a site investigation conducted at the petitioner's instance by an Accredited Geotechnical Professional. The petition shall be resolved exclusively by PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, or the MGB, according to the hazard concerned, within *ninety (90) days* from complete submission, and any resulting reclassification shall be effected solely by updating the published Determination on the national platform. In no case shall any such petition be received, resolved, or given effect by any Building Official, local government, or other office; and no reclassification shall be valid unless reflected on the national platform.

**Section 12. Automatic Integration into the Permit System.** — All building permit applications shall be processed through systems — electronic wherever available — that automatically retrieve and record the National Geohazard Determination of the project site. The hazard classification so retrieved shall form part of the permit record and of the certificate of occupancy. The function of the Building Official with respect to hazard shall be limited to verifying that the design and engineering of the project answer the classification so retrieved, in accordance with this Act and the Referral Codes. The DPWH, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Department of Information and Communications Technology shall implement this integration within eighteen (18) months from the effectivity of this Act, with manual verification protocols in the interim.

**Section 13. Permits in Liquefaction-Prone and Other High-Hazard Areas.** — Construction and rebuilding in Liquefaction-Prone Areas and other areas of elevated geohazard shall be permitted — not prohibited — subject to the following requirements:

- (a) A Geotechnical Investigation of the site, conducted and certified by an Accredited Geotechnical Professional, submitted with the permit application;
- (b) Foundation and ground-improvement engineering responsive to the findings of the Investigation, certified by the structural engineer of record and reviewed as prescribed by the Referral Codes; and
- (c) Disclosure of the hazard classification and the engineering response in the permit and the certificate of occupancy.

No permit shall be denied on the sole ground of hazard classification where the requirements of this Section are met. The State shall maintain, through the agencies under Section 21, financing and technical assistance for compliance with this Section.

**Section 14. Active Fault Setbacks.** — No building intended for human occupancy shall be constructed within the Active Fault Setback prescribed by PHIVOLCS from the surface trace of an active fault. The setback shall be reflected in the National Geohazard Determination and enforced through the permit system under Section 12. Existing structures within a setback shall be prioritized in the assessment program under Article IV and addressed as the implementing rules shall provide, with relocation assistance where required.

**Section 15. Accreditation and Personal Professional Liability.** — The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), through the Board of Civil Engineering and in consultation with the accredited professional organizations, shall establish an accreditation system for geotechnical professionals for purposes of this Act. The accreditation system shall be consistent with the laws governing the practice of civil engineering, architecture, geology, and other regulated professions, and shall not be construed as authorizing any professional to prepare, sign, or seal plans, reports, certifications, or other documents beyond the lawful scope of his or her professional practice. Every certification submitted pursuant to this Act shall be made under the personal professional responsibility of the certifying engineer, without prejudice to the corresponding liability of the firm, corporation, or other entity employing or engaging such professional.

**Section 16. Prohibited Acts and Penalties.** — The following acts are declared unlawful:

- (a) Falsifying, misrepresenting, softening, or overriding the National Geohazard Determination of any location, or causing any permit record to reflect a hazard classification other than the Determination;
- (b) Issuing a building permit or certificate of occupancy in violation of Sections 12, 13, 14, or 18;
- (c) Certifying a Geotechnical Investigation or engineering response that the certifying professional knows, or by professional standards ought to know, to be false, fabricated, or materially deficient;
- (d) Offering, giving, soliciting, or receiving any consideration to procure any act under paragraphs (a) to (c).

Any public official or private individual who commits any of the prohibited acts under this Act shall, upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of six (6) years and one (1) day to twelve (12) years and a fine of not less than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00) but not more than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000.00). In addition to the foregoing penalties: (a) A public official shall suffer the accessory penalty of perpetual disqualification from holding any public office; and (b) A licensed professional shall be subject to the revocation of his or her professional license, without prejudice to any administrative, civil, or criminal liability under existing laws and the rules and regulations of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

**Section 17. Transparency of Hazard in Transactions.** — The hazard classification of a property under the National Geohazard Determination System shall constitute a matter of public record and shall be disclosed in all applications for and issuances of building permits, certificates of occupancy, and such other permits or clearances as may be prescribed under the implementing rules and regulations. No person shall knowingly conceal, misrepresent, falsify, or omit the hazard classification of a property in any sale, lease, mortgage, transfer, or other real-property transaction, or in any disclosure document required under this Act or other applicable laws.

The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), in consultation with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and other concerned government agencies, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to implement this Section, including the identification of the real-property transactions, permits, and disclosure documents to which the disclosure requirement shall apply, consistent with existing laws on contracts, consumer protection, subdivision and condominium development, real-estate service, and other applicable laws.

**Section 18. Integrity of Structural Materials.** — All structural materials used in any building or structure covered by this Act, and in all public infrastructure projects, shall comply with the applicable mandatory Philippine National Standards, including the standards for seismic-grade reinforcing steel. The Department of Trade and Industry, through the Bureau of Philippine Standards, shall keep such standards current with the referral codes and international best practice, and its issuances declaring such standards mandatory are hereby given the force of this Act. It shall be unlawful to supply, certify, or use in such construction any structural material not conforming to the applicable mandatory PNS; violations shall be punished under Section 16, without prejudice to liability under existing product standards and consumer laws. The State, through the Department of Trade and Industry, provide reasonable transition periods and assistance programs for domestic producers affected by the upgrading of materials standards.

#### **ARTICLE IV — HAZARD-HONEST PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING**

**Section 19. Hazard-Responsive Design and Cost Standards for Public Infrastructure.** — All infrastructure of the National Government, its agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned or -controlled corporations, and local government units insofar as nationally funded — including buildings, roads, bridges, flood control, and other public works — shall be designed and cost-estimated according to the Structural Resilience Zone and the National Geohazard Determination of the project site. The DPWH shall, within *eighteen (18) months*, align its Design Guidelines, Criteria and Standards and its cost estimation

guidelines and unit cost references with this Section, and all implementing agencies shall apply the same in project preparation, approval, and procurement.

**Section 20. The Resilience Premium.** — Every government infrastructure project in a zone of elevated hazard shall show, as a distinct and transparent line item in its approved budget and detailed estimates, the Resilience Premium — the incremental cost of meeting the hazard-responsive standards of this Act. The Resilience Premium shall be funded as an integral and non-negotiable component of the project and shall not be reduced, deferred, or value-engineered out in order to fit a uniform cost reference. Where an area of elevated hazard is of strategic, economic, or social importance, the Resilience Premium is declared a priority investment of the State. Zone-referenced estimates under this Article may be used by the Commission on Audit and oversight bodies in the review of the reasonableness of project costs.

**Section 21. Hazard-Informed Land Use Planning.** — The formulation, updating, review, and approval of all comprehensive land use plans and zoning ordinances shall use the National Geohazard Determination, including the Flood and Terrain Hazard Layers, as a mandatory basis. No comprehensive land use plan or zoning ordinance shall be approved by the reviewing authority under existing law without documented integration of the said hazard data. The use of hazard data under this Section shall guide planning, zoning, risk reduction, and development protocols. It shall not, by itself, constitute a reclassification, conversion, expropriation, or taking of private property.

The Department of Science and Technology and its agencies, the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, the MGB, and PAGASA shall transmit and consolidate their respective elevation, LIDAR, floodplain, and waterway datasets into the platform under Section 11 within *twelve (12) months* from the effectivity of this Act, and shall keep the same current. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to govern the classification, conversion, or allocation of land, which shall remain governed by existing law and by any national land use legislation; upon the enactment of a national land use act, the hazard data layer under this Section shall serve as a basis of the national physical framework and plan harmonization thereunder.

## **ARTICLE V — EXISTING BUILDINGS: ASSESSMENT AND RETROFIT**

**Section 22. National Building Resilience Assessment Program.** — There is hereby instituted a National Building Resilience Assessment Program under the DPWH, in coordination with the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the DILG, and local governments, to inventory and structurally assess existing buildings in high-hazard zones against the standards applicable to their zone and use. Priority of assessment shall be: first, public school buildings; second, hospitals and health facilities; third, evacuation centers and government buildings serving disaster response; thereafter, other public buildings and, upon request or as the rules provide, private buildings of critical occupancy. Assessment of all public school buildings in high seismic hazard zones shall be completed within *five (5) years*, and of all priority categories within *ten (10) years*, from the effectivity of this Act. The assessment shall classify buildings according to risk and shall identify whether the appropriate intervention is continued use, monitoring, repair, retrofit, restricted occupancy, replacement or decommissioning.

**Section 23. Retrofit of Public Buildings; Funding.** — Public buildings found sub-standard upon assessment shall be programmed for retrofit, replacement, or, where warranted, decommissioning, under a rolling plan published annually by the DPWH. The retrofit of public-school buildings shall enjoy first priority in programming and release. Funding shall be provided under the annual General Appropriations Act and shall be reported under Section 30.

**Section 24. Support for Private Retrofit and Ground Improvement.** — To support compliance by private owners:

- (a) The Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, and the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG) shall be encouraged, subject to their respective charters, applicable banking laws, and prudent lending standards, to maintain

dedicated financing windows for retrofit, ground improvement, and hazard-compliant reconstruction, at preferential terms for residential and micro, small, and medium enterprise properties;

- (b) Expenses actually incurred for retrofit, Geotechnical Investigation, ground improvement, and hazard compliance under this Act shall be allowable deductions in accordance with the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC);
- (c) Compliance for existing private buildings shall follow the phased periods fixed by the implementing rules, proportionate to occupancy, use, and assessed risk, with the longest reasonable periods afforded to residential owners; and
- (d) The DPWH and local governments shall provide technical assistance, standard retrofit designs for common building types, and simplified permitting for retrofit works.
- (e) No private building shall be ordered vacated, demolished, or subjected to a mandatory retrofit without written notice, technical findings, and an opportunity for the owner or occupant to respond, except when immediate action is necessary to prevent imminent danger to life.

**Section 25. Post-Disaster Rebuilding.** — Rebuilding after any disaster shall comply with this Act, including Section 13 in Liquefaction-Prone Areas. Rebuilding assistance programs of the National Government shall integrate the financing and technical assistance under Section 24, so that families and enterprises rebuilding after calamity rebuild once, and rebuild safely.

## ARTICLE VI — IMPLEMENTATION

**Section 26. Lead and Cooperating Agencies.** — The DPWH shall be the lead implementing agency of this Act. PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, and the MGB shall be its scientific authorities, whose determinations under this Act shall not require the approval of any other office to take effect. The DILG shall enforce compliance by local governments and Building Officials; the DHSUD shall ensure coordination with housing and land-use programs; the DOF and the Bureau of Internal Revenue shall implement the incentive provisions; and the Department of Information and Communications Technology shall support the systems under Section 12.

**Section 27. Capacity Building.** — The DPWH and the DILG shall institute a continuing program of training and certification for Building Officials and their technical staff on this Act, the National Geohazard Determination platform, and the review of geotechnical and structural submissions. Such training shall not be construed as conferring professional authority to prepare, sign, or seal architectural, engineering, geological, or other regulated professional documents.

**Section 28. Integration into the Referral Codes.** — The Referral Codes shall be updated to give full effect to Sections 6, 7, 8, and 9 within *eighteen (18) months* from the effectivity of this Act. Pending such update, the existing provisions of the Referral Codes shall continue to apply, provided that the National Geohazard Determination and Sections 11 to 17 shall be immediately enforceable.

**Section 29. Relationship to Pending General Building and Land Use Legislation.** — This Act is intended to complement any general revision or replacement of the National Building Code. In the event of the enactment of a new general building law, the provisions of this Act shall be deemed integrated therein and shall continue in full force, unless expressly repealed with specific reference to this Act. The same rule shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, upon the enactment of any national land use act, with respect to the hazard data and planning provisions of this Act.

**Section 30. Annual Report to Congress.** — The DPWH shall submit to both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of this Act, including: the status of zoning and Referral Code integration; the operation of the permit-integration system; permits processed in hazard areas; the progress of the Assessment and Retrofit Programs, by region and by priority

category; the utilization of financing windows and incentives; and enforcement actions under Section 16.

**Section 31. Appropriations.** — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act — including the permit-integration systems, the commencement of the Assessment Program, and the initial retrofit of public school buildings — shall be charged against the current appropriations of the implementing agencies, augmented by an initial appropriation of Three Billion Pesos (P3,000,000,000.00). Thereafter, the amounts necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**Section 32. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** — The DPWH, together with PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, the MGB, the DILG, the DHSUD, and the Professional Regulation Commission, and in consultation with the accredited professional organizations, local government leagues, and housing and business sector representatives, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within one hundred twenty (120) days from its effectivity. Failure to promulgate the rules shall not prevent the implementation of the self-executing provisions of this Act, including Sections 11, 13, 14, 16, and 18.

## ARTICLE VII — FINAL PROVISIONS

**Section 33. Relationship to Other Laws.** — This Act shall be construed to complement, and not to diminish, Presidential Decree No. 1096, as amended, Republic Act No. 10121, Republic Act No. 6541, Republic Act No. 11201, the professional regulation laws of engineering and architecture, and other existing laws, and shall be liberally construed in favor of the protection of life.

**Section 34. Separability Clause.** — If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 35. Repealing Clause.** — All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Section 36. Effectivity.** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved.*