

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 56



Introduced by **HON. TERRY L. RIDON**

HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE NECESSITY, COST, AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE MANILA BAY REHABILITATION PROGRAM—PARTICULARLY ITS IMPACT ON FLOODING IN THE CITY OF MANILA—INCLUDING THE BEACH NOURISHMENT, COASTAL RESTORATION, AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE MANILA BAYWALK AREA, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MANILA BAYWALK DOLOMITE BEACH

WHEREAS, in January 2019, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in compliance with the Supreme Court’s Writ of Continuing Mandamus issued in December 2008, launched a comprehensive Manila Bay rehabilitation campaign, dubbed the “Battle for Manila Bay”, aimed at cleaning, rehabilitating, and preserving Manila Bay, including improving coastal defenses and water quality to levels safe for public recreation;

WHEREAS, as part of this initiative, DENR implemented a 500-meter beach nourishment project at the Manila Baywalk—covering debris cleanup, the placement of ordinary sand layers, and overlaying with crushed dolomite rock beginning in September 2020—intended to mitigate erosion, shield coastal properties, and promote ecological benefits ;

WHEREAS, the project incurred an estimated PHP 389 million budget, with PHP 28 million allocated to the dolomite overlay, and underwent replenishments following storms, while DENR consistently maintained that the cost and execution were justified within the rehabilitation program;

WHEREAS, in the course of the 2020 budget deliberations at the House of Representatives, Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones acknowledged that the

controversial artificial beach project was not part of the National Economic and Development Authority's (NEDA) approved master plan;

WHEREAS, critics—including environmental groups, heritage advocates, and senators such as Nancy Binay, Francis Pangilinan, and Risa Hontiveros—have objected to the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, arguing that its aesthetics-driven dolomite beach project was ill-timed during the COVID-19 pandemic, lacked prior issuance of an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) or comprehensive environmental assessment, and prioritized visual appeal over sound ecological planning;

WHEREAS, various groups, including the Nilad Metro Manila Environmental Network, have called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to cease the dumping of crushed dolomite along the Manila Baywalk, denouncing the initiative as an unnecessary and frivolous use of public funds, and asserting that it is environmentally destructive, with the group urging the government to instead focus on sustained cleanup efforts and the cancellation of ongoing reclamation projects;

WHEREAS, scientific experts from the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI) and the group Agham have formally requested that the DENR publish environmental and fisheries impact assessment data for the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach, warning that the project's effects on marine habitats, sediment dynamics, and water quality remain unexamined and may pose risks to the bay's ecosystem and coastal resilience;

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2023, then DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga announced that all reclamation projects in Manila Bay, including the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach, were suspended and are currently under review, with the Department examining whether the Environmental Compliance Certificates (ECCs) and area clearances for these projects, especially those already in progress, have complied with imposed conditions;

WHEREAS, in a verified petition filed in May 2025, fisherfolk groups, environmental NGOs, and church-based organizations urged the Supreme Court and DENR to halt all crushed dolomite dumping in Manila Bay, alleging violations of major environmental laws—including Presidential Decree 1586 (Ecological Impact Assessment), the Clean Water Act, and the Fisheries Code—and characterizing the project as a cosmetic effort that causes cumulative environmental harm without genuine ecological rehabilitation;

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), through its Chairman Don Artes, identified the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach project as a contributing factor to the persistent flooding along Taft Avenue, citing the blockage of three major drainage outfalls, namely, Faura, Remedios, and Estero de San Antonio Abad, during the construction of the artificial beachfront, which caused rainwater to

be rerouted through a sewerage treatment plant unable to handle the volume during heavy rains;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article VI, Section 21 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the Senate or the House of Representatives, or any of its respective committees, may conduct inquiries in aid of legislation in accordance with their duly published rules of procedure;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the House of Representatives, to urge the House Committee on Public Accounts and other appropriate committees to inquire, in aid of legislation, into the necessity, cost, and environmental impact of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program—particularly its impact on flooding in the City of Manila—including the beach nourishment, coastal restoration, and enhancement of the Manila Baywalk area, otherwise known as the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach, and to specifically look into the following related matters:

- a) Whether the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) was a necessary government expense to improve the water quality and environmental conditions of Manila Bay in compliance with the Supreme Court's Mandamus Order on Manila Bay;
- b) Whether the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) was subjected to a thorough environmental impact study, particularly relating to its flooding impact on the immediate and adjacent areas within the City of Manila;
- c) Whether the actual implementation of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) has aggravated flooding in the immediate and adjacent areas within the City of Manila, as a result of the blockage of three major drainage outfalls, namely: Faura, Remedios, and Estero de San Antonio Abad;
- d) Whether the project cost for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) was within typical average costs for similar beach nourishment projects;

- e) Whether government agencies and officials may be held criminally or administratively liable in the event that the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) is deemed an unnecessary government expense, irrelevant to the improvement of water quality and environmental conditions of Manila Bay in compliance with the Supreme Court's Mandamus Order;
- f) Whether government agencies and officials may be held criminally or administratively liable in the event that the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) is found to be not within typical average costs for similar beach nourishment projects;
- g) Whether government agencies and officials may be held criminally or administratively liable in the event that the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) was implemented without a thorough environmental impact study, particularly relating to its flooding impact on the immediate and adjacent areas within the City of Manila;
- h) Whether government agencies and officials may be held criminally or administratively liable in the event that the actual implementation of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area) has, in fact, aggravated flooding in the immediate and adjacent areas within the City of Manila, as a result of the blockage of three major drainage outfalls, namely: Faura, Remedios, and Estero de San Antonio Abad; and
- i) What remediation and other action plans may be undertaken by various government agencies to address flooding and other environmental impacts arising from the implementation of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program (Beach Nourishment and Coastal Restoration and Enhancement of the Manila Baywalk Area).

Adopted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terry L. Ridon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "T" and a trailing flourish.

HON. TERRY L. RIDON