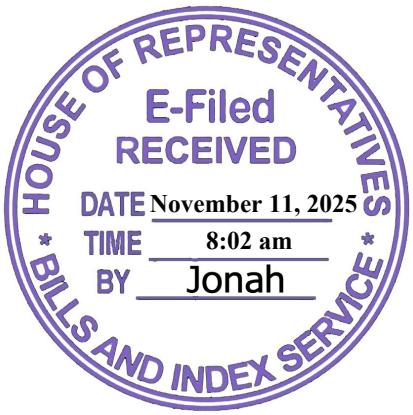
Republic of the Philippines
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**
First Regular Session




**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 432**

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Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

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**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON DISASTER RESILIENCE, CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, AND OTHER RELEVANT COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT A JOINT INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE STATE OF CLIMATE RISK AND VULNERABILITY IN THE NEGROS ISLAND REGION, WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AND TO RECOMMEND THE ADOPTION OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT STRATEGIES TOWARD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the World Risk Index 2024 ("WRI 2024") identifies the Philippines as the most disaster-prone country in the world with a score of 46.9, highlighting its extreme exposure (40.0) and vulnerability (55.0) to climate hazards such as typhoons, flooding, sea-level rise, and drought;

**WHEREAS,** the WRI 2024 defines disaster risk as a function of three primary factors, susceptibility, coping capacities, and adaptive capacities, which collectively measure how populations face, respond to, and recover from climate-related disasters;

**WHEREAS,** Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Constitution declares that "the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature," thereby mandating government institutions at all levels to adopt environmental and climate-responsive measures;

**WHEREAS,** Republic Act No. 9729, otherwise known as the Climate Change Act of 2009, institutionalizes climate change adaptation and mitigation mechanisms, mandates the formulation of a National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, and directs local government units to integrate climate change actions into their development plans and programs;

**WHEREAS,** Negros Occidental, being a coastal and agriculturally dependent province within the Negros Island Region ("NIR"), is highly exposed to multiple climate

hazards such as tropical cyclones, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and flooding, and has been consistently identified as among the areas most at risk from the adverse effects of climate change;

**WHEREAS**, the Province of Negros Occidental and Bacolod City were placed under a state of calamity following the devastating impact brought by Typhoon Tino, which resulted in the loss of 66 lives across Negros Island, with 52 fatalities confirmed in Negros Occidental alone, and affected over 134,000 residents across 31 local government units;

**WHEREAS**, this devastating impact was amplified by the widespread failure of critical lifeline infrastructure, including major roads, bridges, power stations, potable water systems, and telecommunication networks, severely crippling immediate coping and recovery operations and contributing to the province's low score in coping capacities;

**WHEREAS,** the socioeconomic profile of the province, marked by significant reliance on agriculture, fisheries, and tourism, renders its population highly susceptible to climate-related disruptions, threatening food security, livelihoods, and access to essential services;

**WHEREAS**, the WRI 2024 further reveals the Philippines' deficit in coping capacities (58.1) and adaptive capacities (56.1), highlighting the need for enhanced disaster preparedness, community-based adaptation, and climate-responsive governance;

**WHEREAS**, Professor Mahar Lagmay, Head of the UP Resilience Institute, underscored the critical need for integrated and science-based planning in addressing flood control and disaster risks, emphasizing the "ridge-to-reef" or watershed-based approach which recognizes the interconnectedness of ecosystems and human activities from the mountains to the sea;

**WHEREAS**, leveraging advanced scientific tools and data platforms, such as Project NOAH, is essential for accurate forecasting, real-time georeferenced incident reporting, and evidence-based decision-making to enhance the responsiveness of local disaster risk reduction and management efforts;

**WHEREAS**, Nature-based Solutions ("NbS"), including reforestation, mangrove restoration, watershed management, sustainable agriculture, and the protection of coastal ecosystems, offer scientifically proven, cost-effective means of reducing exposure and vulnerability while promoting biodiversity and carbon sequestration;

**WHEREAS,** investing in these NbS, complemented by strong institutional coordination, inclusive local governance, and adaptive social protection programs, aligns with the goals of the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 and the national

commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, that the House of Representatives direct the Committee on Disaster Resilience, jointly with the Committee on Climate Change, Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, and other relevant committees, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the state of climate risk and vulnerability of the NIR, with emphasis on Negros Occidental, using the criteria of the WRI 2024, susceptibility, coping capacities, and adaptive capacities, as analytical benchmarks;

**RESOLVED FURTHER,** that the said inquiry shall also evaluate current and proposed adaptation measures, and recommend the institutionalization of NbS and the integration of *Project NOAH* and *ridge-to-reef* approaches into national and local resilience strategies to mitigate disaster risks, enhance adaptive capacities, and promote sustainable and inclusive development in the NIR;

**RESOLVED, FINALLY,** that the committees are authorized to invite relevant national government agencies, local government units, higher education and research institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector representatives to provide data, expert testimony, and recommendations, and to submit a report to the House of Representatives within sixty (60) days from the conclusion of the inquiry.

*Adopted,*

**JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**