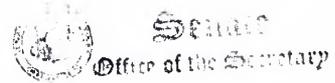
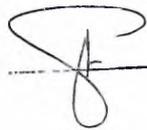


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 JUL 25 P1:29

SENATE
S. No. 834

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Loren B. Legarda

**AN ACT
REQUIRING DISASTER-RELATED INFORMATION TO BE STATED
IN ACCESSIBLE LANGUAGE TO ENSURE PUBLIC
UNDERSTANDING THEREOF**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

What people do before, during, and after a disaster can dramatically affect their ability to cope with and recover from it. However, information is vital in emergencies like these.

For Filipinos to better cope and recover from disasters, accurate information presented in a timely and appropriate manner is necessary to facilitate informed decisions. While important details regarding impending disasters or calamities are already being disseminated to this end, such information is often only communicated using the English language. Complete and correct information in Filipino and other regional language/s or dialect/s is lacking.

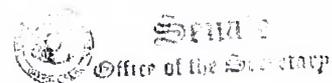
This bill seeks to mandate all government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to translate to Filipino and any other appropriate regional language/s or dialect/s all information relevant to disasters or emergencies. This proposed measure aims to develop more disaster-resilient communities by ensuring that all disaster-related information is language-accessible and readily comprehensible.

For the above-cited reasons, the passage of this bill is urgently sought.



LOREN LEGARDA

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section. 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "*Language Accessibility of*
2 *Public Information on Disasters Act*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The right of the people to information on matters
4 of public concern is recognized in our Constitution. Indeed, communication and
5 information occupy a vital role in nation-building. In times of disaster and other
6 emergencies, and to render meaningful and effective people's right to information, it
7 shall be ensured that announcements, advisories, and similar public communications
8 are accessible in terms of the language or dialect used.

9 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act;

10 (a) *Disaster* refers to a severe disruption of the functioning of a community
11 or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or
12 environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the
13 affected community or society to cope using its own resources. Disasters
14 are often described as a result of the combination of exposure to a
15 hazard, the conditions of vulnerability that are present, and insufficient
16 capacity or measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative
17 consequences. Disaster impacts may include loss of life, injury, disease,

1 and other adverse effects on human, physical, mental, and social well-
2 being, together with damage to property, destruction of assets, loss of
3 services, social and economic disruption, and environmental
4 degradation;

5 (b) *Emergency* refers to an unforeseen or sudden occurrence, especially
6 danger, which demands immediate action; and

7 (c) *State of Calamity* refers to a condition involving mass casualty and/or
8 significant damages to property and roads, disruption of means of
9 livelihood, and normal way of life of people in the affected areas as a
10 result of the occurrence of a natural or human-induced hazard.

11 Sec. 4. *Scope of Application.* - This Act shall cover disasters and other kinds of
12 emergencies which are (1) national in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity
13 or State of National Emergency by the President of the Philippines and (2) provincial,
14 city, or municipal in scope, as declared through a State of Calamity or Emergency by
15 the appropriate local government unit.

16 Sec. 5. *Language Accessibility of Disaster-Related Information.* - In relation to
17 disasters and other emergencies covered by Section 4 of this Act, it shall be mandatory
18 for all government agencies and local government units to convert in an easily
19 understandable form and translate to Filipino and any other appropriate regional
20 language/s or dialect/s all their announcements, advisories, press releases, issuances,
21 and any other information relevant to such disaster or emergency, including:

22 (a) Tropical Cyclones, signals, and other advisories by the Philippine
23 Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration
24 (PAGASA);

25 (b) Volcano, Earthquake, Tsunami, and Landslide advisories and bulletins
26 by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS);

27 (c) Announcements, bulletins, and other advisories of the National Disaster
28 Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Local Disaster
29 Risk Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs) and network of
30 Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) Councils composed of
31 national, regional, provincial, city, municipal DRRM councils and
32 barangay DRRM committees;

- 1 (d) Information on epidemics, outbreaks, and public health emergencies of
2 the Department of Health (DOH);
- 3 (e) Advisories and warnings released by the Department of Environment
4 and Natural Resources - Mines and Geo-sciences Bureau (DENR-MGB),
5 human-induced hazards, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) advisories,
6 Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police
7 (PNP) human security concerns; and,
- 8 (f) Information on the Social Amelioration Program, emergency assistance,
9 and other social protection measures of the Department of Social
10 Welfare and Development (DSWD).

11 *Sec. 6. Transition to Filipino and Other Regional Language or Dialect.* - The
12 translation of the information covered by this Act shall be to Filipino and other
13 regional language/s or dialect/s, as deemed necessary by the government agency and
14 local government unit concerned considering the geographical location of the affected
15 communities and the intended recipients of the information. The translated
16 information shall be disseminated as widely as possible through all available media
17 and communication channels.

18 *Sec. 7. Role of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino.* - The Komisyon sa Wikang
19 Filipino (KWF) shall render the necessary technical assistance and expertise to the
20 government agencies and local government units, including the Bangsamoro
21 Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), and monitor their compliance
22 with the duties mandated by this Act.

23 *Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days from the
24 effectivity of this Act, the KWF, in consultation with other relevant agencies and
25 stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the
26 provisions of this Act.

27 *Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
28 regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
29 hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

30 *Sec. 9. Separability Clause.* - If any part, section or provision of this Act shall be
31 held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected
32 thereby.

1 Sec. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 complete publication either in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of
3 general circulation.

Approved,