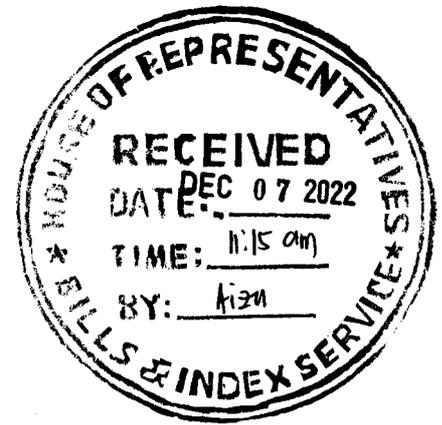


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6559



Introduced by Hon. Representative Florida "Rida" P. Robes
Lone District of the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan

EXPLANATORY NOTE

By the third quarter of 2022, the Province of Bulacan became the epicenter of a flood caused by a super typhoon that devastated thousands of lives and livelihood. Some municipalities in Bulacan, which were not otherwise prone to flooding, were ravaged by floods. This sounds off a wake-up call to set up a comprehensive and integrated flood prevention, control, defense, and management system in the Province of Bulacan.

Flooding brings with it catastrophic effects that throw a wrench to years of blood, sweat and toil of the people of Bulacan in ensuring the prosperity and development of the entire province. Floods do not only bring deaths and destruction of livelihood, but they also pose a threat in destroying cultural and natural heritage that have been passed on by our forebearers.

Nested in the province of Bulacan are numerous historical and cultural heritage of the Filipino people, such as, among others, the Barasoain Church which has been dubbed as the "Cradle of Democracy in the East" where the first Philippine Republic was established; the Casa Real which served as the National Printing Press of the revolutionary government in 1899; the Camestisuhan or Pariancillo District where the Spanish and American-era houses and government structures remain tall throughout the centuries; and churches and museums that hosts the significant relics of our distinct and unique Filipino heritage.

The vulnerability analysis conducted by Perez et. al. in 1999, as reported in the journal of *Climate Research*, revealed that majority of the areas along the coast of Manila Bay specifically Cavite, Metro Manila, and Bulacan could succumb to a one (1) meter sea level rise by year 2100.¹ Areas near riverbanks will also experience flooding when sea level rise reaches a height of two (2) meter.²

When compared to the global average of nineteen (19) centimeters, the Philippines has the largest observed sea level rise at sixty (60) centimeters.³ Owing to the archipelagic configuration of our country, an unabated increase in sea water level further puts at risk 60% of Local Government Units;

¹ Perez, R. T., Amadore, L. A., & Feir, R. B. (1999). Climate change impacts and responses in the Philippines coastal sector. *Climate Research*, 12(2/3), 97-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24866004>

² Perez, R. T., Amadore, L. A., & Feir, R. B. (1999). Climate change impacts and responses in the Philippines coastal sector. *Climate Research*, 12(2/3), 97-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24866004>

³ Perez, R. T., Amadore, L. A., & Feir, R. B. (1999). Climate change impacts and responses in the Philippines coastal sector. *Climate Research*, 12(2/3), 97-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24866004>

64 coastal provinces; 822 coastal municipalities; 25 coastal cities; and an estimated 13.6 million Filipinos who would need to relocate.

The same study also predicted that the most economically-depressed and densely-populated, as well as already flood-prone areas, may withstand a gradual rise in sea level but not when combined with the more powerful storm surges that strike the nation year in and out.⁴

In 2020, the World Bank estimated direct losses of 3.5 billion US dollars per year or over 1.0% of the country's GDP to public and private assets from earthquakes and typhoons. According to a 2022 study of the Philippine Institute of Developmental Studies, the average temperature in the Philippines has been increasing by 0.011 Celsius per year.

Karding alone killed six (6) people in Bulacan. Ironically, five (5) of whom were trained volunteer-rescuers. No less than 5,239 Bulakeños, 1,571 families, including 1,447 children and 231 senior citizens were displaced and forced to evacuate to escape the onslaught of Karding.⁵

According to the Department of Agriculture (DA), as Karding devastated Central Luzon – the nation's top rice-producing region – the agriculture sector lost at least P160.1 million⁶ comprising of rice, corn, vegetables and other high value crops. The economic devastation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic sent many families starving. The last thing that our nation needs is a crisis in food security.

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) predicted in its *2021 Climatic Change and Food Security Analysis (CCFSA)* that the confluence of climate risks including typhoons, floods, and drought would pose major concerns to food security. Price volatility of food products resulting from the disruption of food production in regions impacted by climate-related risks becomes a pressing concern.

We cannot stop natural disasters but we can arm ourselves with preparation. This measure aims to equip the Province of Bulacan with sufficient defense and strongholds that will mitigate against the catastrophic impacts of floods on the provinces. Ultimately, this measure aims to protect its people and its bustling economy, preserve its cultural and natural heritage, and promote inclusive growth and sustainable development that the Bulakeños have worked hard all throughout the centuries.


FLORIDA "RIDA" P. ROBES

⁴ Perez, R. T., Amadore, L. A., & Feir, R. B. (1999). Climate change impacts and responses in the Philippines coastal sector. *Climate Research*, 12(2/3), 97–107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24866004>

⁵ Silverio, F. (2022 September 27). 5,239 displaced by 'Karding' in Bulacan. *The Manila Times*. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/09/27/news/regions/5239-displaced-by-karding-in-bulacan/1859912>

⁶ Rubio, P. (2022, September 27). Groups urge govt to declare 'climate emergency' as Karding leaves millions in losses. *Yahoo! News*. <https://ph.news.yahoo.com/karding-leaves-millions-losses-groups-urge-government-declare-climate-emergency-083838691.html>

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HOUSE BILL NO. 6559

Introduced by Hon. Representative Florida “Rida P. Robes”
Lone District of the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED FLOOD
PREVENTION, CONTROL, DEFENSE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE
PROVINCE OF BULACAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representative in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "*Comprehensive and Integrated Bulacan Flood Prevention, Control, Defense and Management System*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy and Objective.* – It shall be the policy of the State to:

- (a) Protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;
- (b) Protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among our people to effectively carry out the programs and projects of the government essential for the growth and health of the nation, especially in times where the country experiences natural or manmade disasters, calamities, risks and security threats;
- (c) Adopt disaster risk reduction and management approach that is holistic, comprehensive, integrated and proactive in lessening the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of disasters including climate changes, and promote the involvement and participation of all sections ad all stakeholders concerned, at all levels, especially the local community;
- (d) Recognize and strengthen the capacities of LGUs and communities in mitigating and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the impact of disasters;

- (e) Institutionalize the policies, structures, coordination mechanisms and programs with continuing budget appropriation on disaster risk reduction from national down to local levels towards building a disaster-resilient nation and communities;

Towards this end, this Act aims to establishing a comprehensive and integrated flood prevention, control, defense and management system in the province of Bulacan to mitigate flooding caused by climate change and other factors.

SEC. 3. *Flood Control, Prevention, Management and Defense System.* - The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination and consultation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Local and Interior Government (DILG), Department of Transportation (DOTr), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), local government units within the Province of Bulacan, and accredited civil society groups and indigenous peoples groups and/or communities representing residents of the province of Bulacan, shall undertake the construction of a flood prevention, control, defense and management system in the Province of Bulacan.

SEC. 4. *Operating and Guiding Principles* – In establishing the Bulacan flood prevention, control, defense and management system, the DPWH, in coordination and consultation with the aforementioned government agencies, local government units and civil society and indigenous peoples group, shall adhere to the following principles of safety, resilience and sustainability.

As far as practicable, the Bulacan flood prevention, control, defense and management system shall secure the residents of Bulacan from floods while –

- (i) ensuring the residents' access to adequate, affordable and safe housing and resettlement;
- (ii) providing residents access to safe, affordable, accessible, ecofriendly and sustainable transport systems and improving road safety;
- (iii) enhancing inclusive, ecofriendly and sustainable urbanization;
- (iv) protecting and safeguarding the cultural and natural heritage of the province in a manner consistent with Republic Act No. 10066 ("*National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009*");
- (v) significantly reducing the number of deaths and the number of people affected by floods and water-related disasters;
- (vi) substantially decreasing the direct economic losses caused by flood and water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations;
- (vii) supporting positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning;

- (viii) supporting local government units and indigenous communities within the province of Bulacan, through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable, ecofriendly and resilient flood prevention, control and defense infrastructures; and
- (ix) Respecting the rights of the indigenous peoples communities to their ancestral domains/lands, to free and prior consent, to indigenous knowledge systems and political structures, and such other rights as provided under Republic Act No. 8371 (“*Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997*”) where infrastructure projects of the DPWH undertaken to give effect to this shall directly or indirectly affect or involve areas inhabited by indigenous peoples/communities.

SEC. 5. *Funding.* – The amount needed for the implementation of the construction of the Bulacan flood prevention, control, defense and management system shall be included in the appropriations of the DPWH under the General Appropriations Act. Such funds may be augmented through loans, in accordance with the provisions of the law on government borrowing from financial institutions.

This project may also be funded through a Public-Private Partnership in accordance with laws, rules and regulations governing such partnerships.

SEC. 6. *Transfer or Geographical Reassignment of Public Health Workers.* – (a) A disaster risk and emergency responder shall not be transferred and/or reassigned, except when made in the interest of public service or exigencies of service, in which case, the employee concerned shall be informed of the reasons therefore in writing.

(b) If the public health worker believes that such transfer and/or reassignment lacks justification, he/she may appeal his/her case to the Civil Service Commission, which shall cause his/her transfer and/or reassignment to be held in abeyance: *Provided*, That no transfer and/or reassignment whatsoever shall be made three (3) months before any local, national or special elections: *Provided, further*, That the necessary expenses of the transfer and/or reassignment of the public health worker and his/her immediate family shall be paid for by the Government.

(c) For the purposes of this Act, a “transfer” is a movement from one position to another which is of equivalent rank, level or salary without break in service; while a “geographical reassignment” (hereinafter referred to as “reassignment”) is a movement from one geographical location to another.

SEC. 7. *Submission of Reports.* – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, and at the end of every calendar quarter thereafter, the Secretary of Public Works and Highways shall submit progress reports to each House of Congress on the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders and their implementing rules, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in one (1) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,