

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 444

Introduced by HON. FLORENCIO C. GARAY

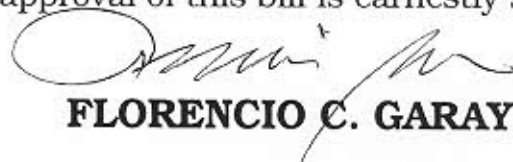
EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to further protect the fishing industry in the country, amending for the purpose Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as the "*Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998*."

The fishing industry is vital to the Philippine economy. As an archipelagic state with over 2.2 million square kilometers of highly productive seas, the Philippines is fortunate to have vast fishery resources at its disposal. However, all of the country's main fish species and marine organisms are showing signs of overfishing due to the indiscriminate methods of catching fish such as the use of fine-mesh net, explosives, and poisonous substances which further deplete the country's marine resources. All these, together with the gathering of fish eggs, fish fry and fingerlings, aggravate the shortage of fish supply.

The Philippine Fisheries Code was enacted to protect the fishing industry and aquatic resources in the country and ensure the sustainable development and conservation of our marine resources for the future generation. Ten years after the passage of the Philippine Fisheries Code, however, the fishing industry finds the strong need to prohibit the sale of fish eggs, fish fry and fingerlings for commercial purposes otherwise there will come a time when there will be no more fish to catch. Hence, this measure seeks to illustrate government's utmost fidelity to the protection and management of the country's fisheries and aquatic resources.

In view of its vital importance, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


FLORENCIO C. GARAY

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL PROTECTION TO THE FISHING
INDUSTRY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO.
8550, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE FISHERIES
CODE OF 1998.

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

SECTION 1. Section 103 of Republic Act No. 8550 is hereby amended by adding a new paragraph to read as follows:

"SEC. 103. Other Violations. - The following fisheries activities shall also be considered as a violation of this code:

- a. *Failure to comply with the minimum safety standards. -*

xxx xxx xxx

F. *GATHERING OF FISH EGGS, FISH FRY AND FINGERLINGS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES. - IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON TO CATCH, CAPTURE OR GATHER FISH EGGS, FISH FRY AND FINGERLINGS OF ANY FISHERY SPECIES FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES: PROVIDED, THAT THE PROHIBITION SHALL COVER ONLY THOSE FISH EGGS, FISH FRY AND FINGERLINGS CAUGHT IN THE OCEAN, SEA AND LAKES AND SHALL NOT COVER THOSE HATCHED OR PROPAGATED IN LEGALLY ACCREDITED HATCHERIES AND*

PONDS: *PROVIDED, FURTHER,* THAT THE PROHIBITION ON SELLING SHALL NOT APPLY TO THE GATHERING OF FRY, FINGERLINGS, GLASS EELS, ELVERS, TABIOS AND ALAMANG AND SUCH SPECIES WHICH BY THEIR NATURE ARE SMALL BUT ARE ALREADY MATURE AS IDENTIFIED IN THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT."

SEC. 2. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,