

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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House Bill No. 186

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is regularly hit by typhoons all year round.

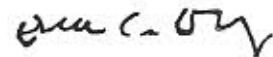
All throughout these years, we are witnesses to the extent of devastation these typhoons and other natural calamities can cause to our nation. Just a year ago, typhoon Yolanda left hundreds of our fellow Filipinos homeless and thousands of them dead. It took a considerable number of months before the whole affected community regained an ounce of strength to start recovering. During a state of calamity, every Filipino family becomes vulnerable to countless problems entailed from a strong typhoon and/or other natural disasters. Each person needs to start from scratch to get back a little of what they used to have.

In a state of calamity, it is therefore understandable for those affected people to prioritize obligations and responsibilities one by one. The need to eat and find shelter after a typhoon or an earthquake wiped out everything a person or a family has, is of course always the main concern. Then the other responsibilities follow after that.

During these moments, it is hard enough for the head of the family, or a person living alone, to recover from their loss. Hence, it is the obligation of the State to help each and every one affected by such calamities and to lessen their burdens as much as possible.

One of the ways this can be done is to allow the affected people and/or families a grace period for paying up utility bills until such time that the situation has stabilized in areas hit by calamities.

Through this measure, the victims of typhoons and other fortuitous events will be able to focus on securing their basic and primary needs first before anything else. They will not have to worry about the due bills which they have to pay and so they can make use of their money, or what's remaining thereof – wisely.



ERIC OLIVAREZ

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**AN ACT GIVING THE PERSONS AFFECTED BY TYPHOONS AND
OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS IN AREAS DECLARED TO BE IN A
STATE OF CALAMITY A MORATORIUM, FORBEARANCE OR
GRACE PERIOD IN THE PAYMENT OF UTILITY BILLS**

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the “Delayed Payment of Bills for Persons Affected by a State of Calamity Act of 2015”.

SECTION 2. *Coverage.* This Act shall cover all natural persons residing or operating any business in a certain area declared to be in a State of Calamity, and who have utility payment obligations in the said affected locality.

SECTION 3. *Limitation.* Natural disasters shall include typhoons, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, and other analogous events. Provided, that the area affected by such disasters is declared to be in a State of Calamity by the proper authorities. Moreover, utility bills covered

under this act shall include water, electricity, telephone, internet, cable, and other similar bills.

SECTION 5. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect after its complete publication in at least three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED.