Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6710

Introduced by the Honorable ABRAHAM N. TOLENTINO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The current COVID-19 pandemic has brought and will bring untold stories of financial hardships to millions of Filipinos. Experts have already warned about impending economic privation. As such, this representation is respectfully proposing for the adoption of a law that will suspend the payment of certain obligations during times of crises. This law will not only be applicable during this 2020 COVID-19 pandemic but will likewise be applied during times of calamites or disasters.

The proposed law seeks to provide a moratorium on all electric, water, and telephone bills in times of a state of calamity. The measure will likewise allow citizens to settle said payments on an installment basis. These mechanisms are clearly for upholding the general welfare of Filipinos, helping their financial well-being during and immediately after the presence of natural or man-made calamities or disasters.

This representation believes that the proposition of imposing a moratorium on the payment by citizens for certain obligations during calamities, thru a statute, will not violate the non-impairment clause. It is axiomatic that non-impairment clause is overridden by the police power of the state. As reiterated by the Supreme Court in Phil-Am Life v. Auditor General (G.R. L-19255, January 18, 1968), the constitutional guaranty of non-impairment is limited by the exercise of the police power of the State, in the interest of public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.

Further, giving Filipinos an economic reprieve on payments for electricity, water, telecommunications bills during a state of calamity is in consonance with the advancement of social justice, as enunciated in our Constitution.

Approval of the bill is earnestly sought.
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AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT SCHEME ON BASIC
UTILITY BILLS DURING CLAAMITES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES TO BE KNOWN
AS “THE THREE-GIVES LAW”

SECTION 1. Short Title – This Act shall be known as the Three Gives Act.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
promote the general welfare, public safety, health and economic security of the
Filipino people in times of calamity, natural or man-made.

SECTION 3. Coverage – The law shall cover all residential electric, water, and
telecommunication bills, and shall apply when a state of calamity is declared.

SECTION 4. Moratorium – There shall be a moratorium on all payments for
residential electric, water, and telecommunication bills, during the entire duration of
a state of calamity, provided that, nothing in this law shall prevent the voluntary
payment by customers.

SECTION 5. Continuity of Service – All holders of public utility franchises and
other service providers, are prohibited from collecting payment and discontinuing the
services it provides during the entire duration of a state calamity.

SECTION 6. Installment Payments – Any amount due and demandable during the
moratorium period shall be payable in three (3) equal monthly installments, without
interest, which shall accrue a month after the cessation of a state of calamity.

SECTION 7. Penalty - All public utility franchises and other service providers, who
are found to have violated any provision of this Act shall be punished with a fine of
not more than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00) for each violation.

SECTION 8. Implementation – This law shall be implemented by the Local Water
Utilities Administration, Energy Regulatory Commission, National Electrification
Commission, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, and such other concerned government offices.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause – If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to have force and effect.

SECTION 11. Effectivity Clause – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in newspapers of general circulation.