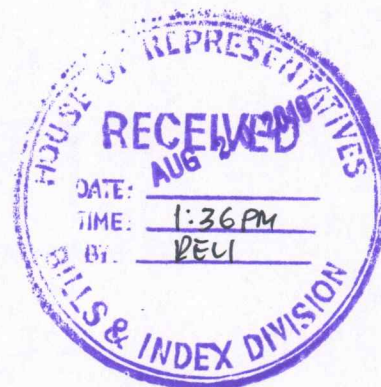


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4043



Introduced by Representative Ferdinand L. Hernandez

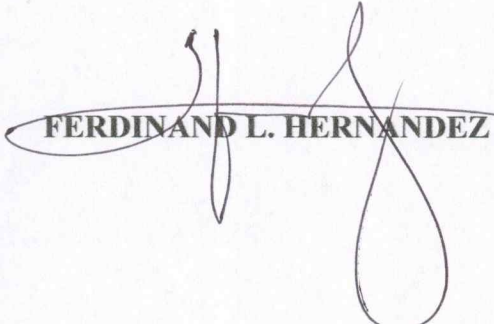
AN ACT PENALIZING PRANK CALLERS TO EMERGENCY HOTLINES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Emergency 911 Hotline was established as the nationwide emergency hotline number for police, medical, firefighting, and rescue assistance. In order to function efficiently and responsively, it needs to be used only for its established purposes, unhampered by any unnecessary activity. The hotline deals with life-and-death situations and there is no room for playing around.

As such, this bill seeks to illegalize the act of making prank calls to the Emergency 911 Hotline. In the same way that bomb jokes are punishable by law for the unnecessary panic and inefficiency that they cause, prank calls are also detrimental to our emergency services. Every second is important in an emergency, and time cannot be wasted on prank calls.

Considering the rationale stated above, the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.


FERDINAND L. HERNANDEZ

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 4043

Introduced by Representative Ferdinand L. Hernandez

AN ACT
PENALIZING PRANK CALLERS TO EMERGENCY HOTLINES

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

Section 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Anti-Prank Callers Act of 2019."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the general welfare or the people. Towards this end, the State aims to prohibit malicious and improper use of telecommunication devices.

Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act:

- a.) Prank call refers to a mischievous or malicious telephone call made to trick or fool someone with the intention to annoy, abuse, threaten, harass, or solicit any comment, request, suggestion or sound which is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy or indecent, or a call intending to make false requests or false alarm of an emergency, knowing the report or information or alarm to be false;
- b.) Emergency refers to a serious, unexpected and often dangerous situation requiring immediate attention and action; and
- c.) Hotline refers to a direct telecommunication set up for a specific purpose.

Sec. 4. Prohibition. - Emergency hotlines established for the purpose of responding to emergency situations shall, at all times, be free from receiving unnecessary calls. It shall be prohibited for any individual to make prank calls to any hotline at any time.

Sec. 5. Penalties. - Any person who violates this Act shall be penalized with:

- a.) Arresto menor and a fine of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) for the first offense;
 - b.) Arresto mayor and a fine of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) for the second offense;
- and

c.) Prision correccional and a fine of Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) for the third and succeeding offenses.

Provided, That the foregoing penalties shall be imposed without prejudice to other liabilities under the Revised Penal Code or any special law arising out of the prohibited act herein.

Sec. 6. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is subsequently declared unconstitutional, the validity of the remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 7. Repealing Clause. – All acts and decrees, executive orders, implementing rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 8. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,