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2 Republic of the Philippines
3 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
4 Quezon City

5 **EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**
6 Third Regular Session

7
8 **HOUSE BILL No. 9516**
9



10 **Introduced by**
11 **BAYAN MUNA Reps. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,**
12 **EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT, and FERDINAND R. GAITE,**
13 **GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,**
14 **ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,**
15 **and KABATAAN Party-List Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**
16

17
18 **AN ACT PROVIDING FOR**
19 **A UNIFORM SCHEME FOR REFUND AND REBOOKING OF AIRLINE**
20 **TICKETS IN FLIGHTS AFFECTED BY PROLONGED NATURAL DISASTERS**
21 **OR PANDEMICS**
22

23
24 **Explanatory Note**
25

26 Freedom of movement or right to travel is one of the most affected activity and right of
27 people during the COVID-19 pandemic as restrictive measures are imposed to help
28 prevent its further spread.

29
30 As a result, in the airline industry, for instance, many passengers who have booked their trips
31 in advance could no longer use their tickets as flights were cancelled or transferred to a later
32 date. This situation was compounded by the fact that many has lost their jobs and sources
33 of income and may have to look for other sources of funds.

34
35 While travel is put on halt, one of the issues that will arise is the procedure of refunding or
36 rebooking tickets, as there is no uniform policy as set by law to give guidance to airlines,
37 especially with the situation that would entail massive flight cancellations such as the one
38 brought by this pandemic.

39
40 Current rules and regulations on rebooking and/or travel refund relies only on the unilateral
41 guidelines set by the airlines themselves. Regulators and authorities have not anticipated the
42 massive effect of the pandemic to the airlines and its passengers. The current Air Passenger
43 Bill of Rights did not anticipate this pandemic, and as legislators, we shall institutionalize
44 measures that the situation may see fit.

45
46 This bill aims to provide a uniform procedure to the passengers whose flights are affected by
47 the pandemic.

48
49 It needs to be given further stress that the pandemic and the resulting travel restrictions
50 should not and cannot mean the unwarranted suspension of the rights of consumers and
51 airline passengers. Those rights should at all times be protected, more especially during
52 times of crises or pandemic.
53

1 To provide assurance and temporary relief to airline customers that their unused fares can be
2 immediately refunded or to be reused eventually, the immediate enactment of this bill is
3 earnestly sought.

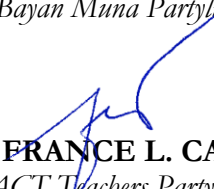
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5 Approved,
6


REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist


REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
Bayan Muna Partylist


REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Partylist


REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
GABRIELA Women's Party


REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Partylist


REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist

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**BAYAN MUNA Reps. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR
A UNIFORM SCHEME FOR REFUND AND REBOOKING OF AIRLINE
TICKETS IN FLIGHTS AFFECTED BY PROLONGED NATURAL DISASTERS
OR PANDEMICS**

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

23
24

25 SECTION 1. *Title.* This Act shall be known as the “*An Act Providing For*
26 *A Uniform Scheme For Refund And Rebooking Of Airline Tickets In Flights Affected By Prolonged*
27 *Natural Disasters Or Pandemics*” or simply the “*Pandemic Airfare Relief Act of 2021*”.

28

29 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* To ensure public safety, the State shall introduce measures
30 to regulate human activity. One of the current restrictions imposed during pandemics is
31 travel, and any further restrictions may affect the flight tickets of those who booked it in
32 advanced. The law aims to give a uniform procedure to be followed by all airlines.

33

34 SECTION 3. *Uniform Procedure.* Upon declaration of a travel ban, health emergency or a
35 prolonged natural calamity in a local destination as determined by competent government
36 agencies. Passengers who are affected by such ban may choose to avail an outright refund,
37 free rebooking, or deposit to a travel fund.

38

39 Refund

- 40 a. The passengers can avail of the refund through payment reversal, no fees shall be
41 imposed by the airline or the payment processor.
42 b. The refund can be initiated up to one year after the ban is in place.
- 43

44 Rebooking

- 45 a. The passengers can rebook their tickets for other destinations at any time, no
46 additional fees shall be charged, except for the fare difference, if there’s any.
47 b. The rebooking can be initiated at any time
- 48

49 Travel Fund

- 50 a. Passengers may opt to have their ticket value converted into a travel fund which
51 can be used to book another flight, or to avail of any allied services provided for
52 by the airline in their respective booking portals
53 b. The travel fund shall not expire, and must be enabled for an actual cash refund
54 by the passenger, if they see it fit.
- 55

56 SECTION 4. *Helpdesk.*

- 1 a. Airlines are encouraged to resolve concerns regarding refund and rebooking through
2 their internal systems. For unresolvable disputes, an inter-agency helpdesk shall be
3 established to resolve such disputes.
4 b. This agency shall be under the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP)
5 with technical guidance with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).
6
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8 SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Transportation (DOTr),
9 Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) and the Department of Trade and
10 Industry (DTI) shall craft the IRR of this law, within 60 days upon its effectivity
11

12 SECTION 6. All laws, decrees, executive' orders, resolutions, revenue regulations,
13 ordinances or circulars inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
14 modified accordingly or declared null and void and inoperative.
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16 SECTION 7. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the
17 completion of their publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general
18 circulation.
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20 Approved,
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