

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4453



Introduced by Representatives LEILA M. DE LIMA, ADRIAN MICHAEL A. AMATONG, ARLENE "KAKA J. BAG-AO, PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA, JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL' DIOKNO, EDGAR R. ERICE, JAIME R. FRESNEDI, DADAH KIRAM ISMULA, CIELO KRISSEL B. LAGMAN, PAOLO HENRY M. MARCOLETA, ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO and ALFONSO V. UMALI, JR.

AN ACT
CREATING AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE MISUSE
OF FUNDS FOR FLOOD CONTROL AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS, GRANTING IT BROAD INVESTIGATIVE AND SUBPOENA
POWERS, PROVIDING FOR A SECRETARIAT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Billions in taxpayers' money are being lost to corruption. Recent widespread flooding in the country has exposed the alarming and glaring misuse of public funds allocated for flood control and other government infrastructure projects – including huge budget cuts and insertions, kickbacks, overpriced and substandard projects, and even non-existent or 'ghost' projects.

During the Senate budget briefing with the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) on September 2, 2025, Finance Secretary Ralph Recto revealed that the Philippine economy may have lost around P42.3 to P118.5 billion in the last two years due to corruption in flood control projects.¹ These funds could have been spent on meaningful services and programs that should have benefited Filipinos and contributed to economic growth, but were instead lost to corruption.

As the floods continue not only to disrupt but also to claim the lives and livelihood of our countrymen, and while our communities are deprived of urgently needed services such as decent roads, bridges, and other vital facilities, the impacts of corruption are now felt more than ever, like flood water gushing out from each and every failed flood control project we have all witnessed and endured.

¹ Maligro, Tatiana. (3 September 2025). DOF: Corruption in flood control projects cost PH economy up to P118.5 billion. Rappler. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/business/dof-ghost-flood-control-projects-economic-losses/>

In the midst of widespread and blatant misuse of flood control funds, we now face a dire crisis in public trust. This problem extends beyond one sector, spanning a large swath of government bureaucracy and cutting across many segments of public sector spending.

There are now ongoing investigations in both chambers of Congress on the anomalous flood control projects led by the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee and the House Infrastructure Committee. However, a number of lawmakers themselves believe there is an underlying doubt and a clear case of conflict of interest in conducting these investigations as some of their colleagues reportedly acted as “sponsors” and contractors for these overpriced, sub-standard, and ghost infrastructure projects. We need to dig deeper into the crux of these anomalies through a process that is insulated from political maneuverings and partisan propaganda, a mechanism that is worthy of the confidence and trust of our people.

It is therefore timely and urgent that we establish a credible, broad-based and independent Commission with full authority to conduct thorough investigations of allegations of corruption in flood control and other infrastructure projects; to recommend prosecution and file administrative and criminal cases against erring public officials and employees, as well as private individuals and entities; and to propose necessary reforms in our laws, regulations and government policies—such as those concerning procurement, auditing, and project monitoring mechanisms—to prevent recurrence of corruption in government infrastructure projects.

To guarantee its credibility and independence, the said Commission must be led by individuals with unquestionable integrity. This Independent Body shall not be composed of incumbent government officials, but of impartial and principled leaders such as legal luminaries, auditors, industry experts, and representatives from the business sector, academe and civil society. Supporting the Commission shall be a Secretariat, with technical assistance to come from institutions such as the Commission on Audit (COA), the Office of the Ombudsman, Department of Justice (DOJ), Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and other relevant government agencies, as well as reputable private entities.

The people’s trust in our government is at stake. Filipinos deserve the whole truth. They deserve an Independent Commission that is truly empowered to ensure full accountability—no cover ups, no sacred cows, and no stone left unturned. This undertaking is of utmost importance to safeguard the people’s money, ensure transparency and accountability, and restore the trust of the Filipino people.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


LEILA M. DE LIMA
Representative

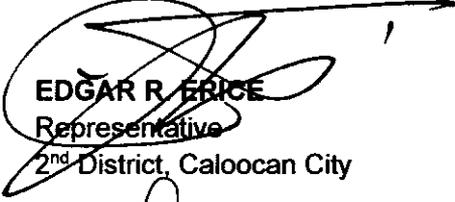
Mamamayang Liberal (ML) Partylist

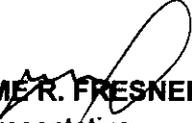

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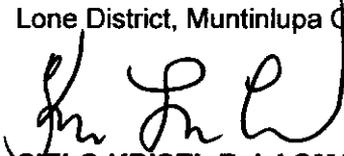

PERCIVAL V. CENDANA
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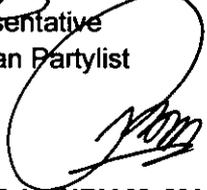

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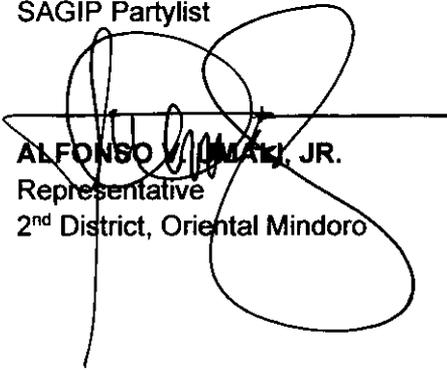

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CIELO KRISEL B. LAGMAN
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ALFONSO V. MAKIL, JR.
Representative
2nd District, Oriental Mindoro

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Introduced by Representatives LEILA M. DE LIMA, ADRIAN MICHAEL A. AMATONG, ARLENE "KAKA J. BAG-AO, PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA, JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL' DIOKNO, EDGAR R. ERICE, JAIME R. FRESNEDI, DADAH KIRAM ISMULA, CIELO KRISSEL B. LAGMAN, PAOLO HENRY M. MARCOLETA, ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO and ALFONSO V. UMALI, JR.

AN ACT
CREATING AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE MISUSE OF FUNDS FOR FLOOD CONTROL AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, GRANTING IT BROAD INVESTIGATIVE AND SUBPOENA POWERS, PROVIDING FOR A SECRETARIAT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Independent Commission
2 Against Infrastructure Corruption Act of 2025."
3

4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to safeguard the
5 people's money, ensure transparency and accountability in public expenditures, and
6 preserve public trust. To address persistent reports of corruption in flood control and
7 other infrastructure projects, there is a need for an independent, credible, and broad-
8 based commission to investigate allegations of corruption, institute administrative
9 actions, and recommend prosecution, where warranted.
10

11 SEC. 3. *Creation of the Commission.* - There is hereby created an Independent
12 Commission Against Infrastructure Corruption (ICAIC), hereinafter referred to as the
13 Commission, which shall exist for a period of two (2) years, unless extended by law.
14

15 SEC. 4. *Composition.* - The Commission shall be composed of five (5)
16 members, none of whom shall be incumbent government officials, as follows:
17

18 1. One retired Justice of the Supreme Court;

- 1 2. One Certified Public Accountant with expertise in forensic accounting or
2 auditing;
- 3 3. One industry leader, preferably an engineer;
- 4 4. One respected academician with background on either public finance,
5 economics or urban and regional development planning; and
- 6 5. One prominent representative from the business sector or civil society.
7

8 The retired Supreme Court Justice shall be the Chairperson of the Commission.
9

10 SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions.* - The Commission shall have the following
11 powers:
12

- 13 1. Investigate allegations, complaints, and active cases of misuse, fraud, or
14 corruption in flood control and other infrastructure projects penalized under
15 all pertinent laws, including the Revised Penal Code and special laws such
16 as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Anti-Plunder Act, the Anti-
17 Money Laundering Act, the Omnibus Election Code, and the procurement
18 laws;
19
- 20 2. Obtain full and unrestricted access to all government records, including but
21 not limited to plans, proposals, contracts, bidding documents, financial
22 reports, audit reports, and official correspondence, as may be necessary in
23 the exercise of its investigative mandate;
24
- 25 3. Administer oath and take testimony, and allow perpetuity of testimonies
26 provided by witnesses, pursuant to and in accordance with the applicable
27 rules of court and applicable jurisprudence, subject to the right of cross-
28 examination;
29
- 30 4. Issue subpoenas *duces tecum* and *ad testificandum* to compel witnesses
31 and the production of records, books, and documents;
32
- 33 5. Cite persons in contempt for refusal to obey lawful orders;
34
- 35 6. Recommend to the Department of Justice (DOJ) the grant of witness
36 immunity for any person who provides material information essential to the
37 investigation, and ensure enrollment into the Department's Witness
38 Protection Program, as well as enforce other protections for the witness,
39 including but not limited to ensuring adequate financial assistance,
40 relocation and identity concealment and protection, as deemed applicable
41 by the Commission;
42
- 43 7. Coordinate with the Department of Justice to grant immunity or reduce
44 sentences for qualified material witnesses, subject to the Commission's final
45 approval;
46
- 47 8. Recommend to the DOJ or the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) the
48 prosecution of any public official, government employee, contractor, or

1 private individual or entity for violations of the Anti-Plunder Law (R.A. 7080),
2 the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (R.A. 3019), the Revised Penal
3 Code, the procurement laws, and other applicable statutes and regulations.
4 In cases where corruption in infrastructure projects is attended by election
5 offenses, such as prohibited campaign donations, the Commission shall
6 initiate complaints with the COMELEC;

7
8 9. Institute administrative cases, and refer verified complaints and official
9 reports to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), the Government
10 Procurement Policy Board (GPPB), the Securities and Exchange
11 Commission (SEC), the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB),
12 or any other administrative agency or quasi-judicial body, for purposes of
13 administrative action, enforcement, or regulation that are related to
14 violations of relevant non-penal statutes, executive regulations and
15 administrative issuances;

16
17 10. Recommend reforms in project and program planning, procurement,
18 auditing, and project monitoring systems to prevent recurrence of corruption
19 in government infrastructure projects; and

20 11. Promulgate such rules and regulations, including rules of procedure, as may
21 be necessary to efficiently and effectively carry out the objectives of the
22 Commission, consistent with the provisions of law.

23
24 *SEC. 6. Coverage.* - The Commission shall have jurisdiction to hear and
25 investigate all allegations, complaints, and active cases of graft, corruption,
26 malversation, and plunder in infrastructure projects, as well as other criminal and
27 administrative offenses committed as a consequence thereof, for the purpose of filing
28 administrative and criminal complaints, including those already pending investigation
29 by other investigative and prosecutorial agencies of the government.

30
31 All complaints involving corruption in infrastructure projects filed with the regular
32 investigation and prosecution agencies shall be referred to the Commission to avoid
33 duplication of investigations. The terms of such referral shall be mutually agreed upon
34 with the Commission by the Office of the Ombudsman and the Secretary of Justice,
35 taking into consideration the spirit, purpose, and mandate of this Act.

36
37 *SEC. 7. Public Hearings.* - In the conduct of its investigation, the hearings shall
38 be held in public and will be open to the media. A suitable venue shall be available,
39 with facility for livestreaming of the hearings or proceedings.

40
41 *SEC. 8. Prohibition on the Issuance of Temporary Restraining Orders,*
42 *Preliminary Injunctions, and Preliminary Mandatory Injunctions.* - No court, except
43 the Supreme Court, shall issue any temporary restraining order, preliminary injunction,
44 or preliminary mandatory injunction against the Commission, its members, and the
45 Secretariat, with respect to any matter or act within the Commission's mandate,
46 including the conduct of any hearing or proceeding, the pursuit of investigation, and
47 the filing and handling of criminal and administrative cases.

1
2 SEC. 9. *Secretariat.* - A Secretariat is hereby created to provide administrative,
3 technical, and research support to the Commission. The Secretariat shall be headed
4 by an Executive Director and staffed with personnel on secondment from government
5 agencies and new hires, subject to civil service rules.
6

7 SEC. 10. *Designation of Agency Officials and Hiring of Personnel.* - The
8 National Prosecution Service (NPS), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Philippine
9 National Police (PNP), Office of the Ombudsman (OMB), Commission on Audit (COA),
10 Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), and Commission on Elections (COMELEC)
11 shall designate such number of lawyers, investigators, auditors, and officials as may
12 be required by the Commission to render full-time service to the Commission. The
13 Commission may select from among agency officials holding permanent plantilla
14 positions in their respective agencies. The Commission shall also determine such
15 number of confidential personnel, as well as technical consultants, who shall serve at
16 its pleasure on a co-terminus or contractual basis.
17

18 SEC.11. *Support Agencies.* - The Commission shall require all concerned
19 government agencies under the Executive Department to render assistance to its
20 investigation, including the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH),
21 Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Justice (DOJ),
22 Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Government Procurement Policy
23 Board (GPPB), Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), Philippine National Police
24 (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Securities and Exchange Commission
25 (SEC), Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB), and Professional
26 Regulation Commission (PRC). The independent constitutional bodies such as the
27 Commission on Audit (COA), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Commission on
28 Elections (COMELEC), and the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) shall also extend the
29 necessary assistance to the Commission.
30

31 SEC. 12. *Assistance from the Academe, Industry, and Civil Society.* - The
32 Commission may likewise seek technical assistance from the academe, research
33 institutions, civil society organizations, and industry associations, such as those of civil
34 and structural engineers, as well as urban and regional development planning
35 experts.
36

37 SEC. 13. *Funding.* - The amount necessary for the initial operations of the
38 Commission shall be charged against the Contingent Fund of the Office of the
39 President. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual
40 General Appropriations Act (GAA).
41

42 SEC. 14. *Reporting.* - The Commission shall submit periodic reports of its
43 findings and recommendations to Congress and the President, and make these
44 reports available to the public, subject to due process and confidentiality requirements.
45

46 SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is declared
47 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain valid.
48

1 SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,