

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'22 AUG -1 P 1 56

SENATE
S. No. 972

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY FOR LIVESTOCK-RELATED
DISEASES IN EVERY PROVINCE WHERE THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY IS A MAJOR
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

2019 was the year when the country's local swine industry was hit hard. African swine fever or ASF reached the Philippines and spread like wildfire across multiple cities and provinces. This resulted in the culling of thousands of pigs, wiping out entire farms and growers, the recall of pork-based products by food processing companies and local governments frantically imposing entry bans for all pork and pork-related or commingled products from disease-stricken areas. The outbreak adversely affected the 260-billion-peso swine industry of the country which is also the eight biggest pork producer by volume worldwide.

This 2022 the threat of ASF resurfaces as new cases were reported in various provinces all over the country.¹ To make matters worse, bird flu outbreaks in the poultry industry were also emerging, with a total 498 new bird flu cases were registered in Luzon and 21 in Mindanao.²

In the past, the Philippines had been threatened by various livestock diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease, *peste de petits ruminants* (PPR) or goat plague, avian influenza or bird flu outbreak, and red tide or algal blooms. These disease outbreaks definitely resulted to economic strain and loss to the domestic livestock sector.

In situations like this, prevention and containment of the disease is still the optimal

¹ Talavera, Catherine. Philstar.com (13 June 2022). *Philippines logs new ASF cases*. Retrieved from: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/06/13/2187998/philippines-logs-new-asf-cases>

² Talavera, Catherine. Philstar.com (18 June 2022). *Philippines reports new bird flu outbreaks*. Retrieved from: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/06/18/2189124/philippines-reports-new-bird-flu-outbreaks->

solution. The government's thrust must be that of early detection and control of the disease to prevent it from reaching the level of an outbreak and from spreading across entire regions. This bill is filed to further strengthen the country's capacity for early detection and preventive response to livestock diseases.

Under this proposed measure, the establishment of diagnostic laboratories in all provinces where the livestock industry is a major economic activity will be facilitated. The Diagnostic Laboratory will be under the supervision and management of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Office of the region where it is located. These laboratories are mandated to study, research and identify the disease strains that affect the local livestock industry across different animals (cattle, swine, goat, carabao, chicken, etc.) and to recommend the appropriate vaccines and other measures necessary to address and stop the spread of the diseases. This bill also contains a provision for the implementation of an information, education and communication (IEC) campaign by the DA upon the determination of the existence of a livestock disease outbreak.

In view of this, early passage of this bill is sought.



MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator

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1 **AN ACT**
2 **ESTABLISHING A DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY FOR LIVESTOCK-RELATED**
3 **DISEASES IN EVERY PROVINCE WHERE THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY IS A**
4 **MAJOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND**
5 **FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

6 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Livestock-Related
7 Disease Diagnostic Laboratory Act".

8 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared as the policy of the State
9 to develop and support the livestock industry in the country in order to promote food
10 security.

11 Towards this end, the State shall institute programs and mechanisms to protect
12 the livestock farming industry from various types of diseases and epidemics. Early
13 detection of the various types of diseases and epidemics is critical in preventing the
14 huge economic loss brought about by its spread and transmission. The establishment
15 of a diagnostic laboratory equipped with the necessary tools and facilities and staffed
16 by experts is instrumental in achieving this goal.

17 Sec. 3. *Establishment of a Diagnostic Laboratory for Livestock-Related*
18 *Diseases.* – The Department of Agriculture (DA) is hereby mandated to establish a
19 Diagnostic Laboratory in every province where the livestock industry is a major

1 economic activity. The Diagnostic Laboratory shall be under the supervision and
2 management of the DA Regional Office of the region where it is located. Said
3 laboratory shall study, research and identify the disease strains that affect the local
4 hog industry and shall recommend the appropriate vaccines and other measures
5 necessary to address and stop the spread of the diseases.

6 The DA, in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI),
7 Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS), shall
8 determine the provinces where the livestock industry is a major economic activity and
9 where the Diagnostic Laboratories will be set up.

10 *Sec. 4. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign.* – Upon
11 determination by the Department of Agriculture of a livestock-related disease
12 outbreak, the DA, in coordination with local government units, shall conduct a massive
13 information, education and communication (IEC) campaign pertaining to the particular
14 disease strain that affects a particular region, and shall recommend the appropriate
15 preventive measures to be undertaken by farmers.

16 The IEC campaign shall include, among others:

- 17 a. Dissemination of guidelines on the various measures to be undertaken by
18 livestock farmers in order to prevent the spread of the disease;
- 19 b. Raising public awareness through print, radio, television and other media
20 platforms on the specific strain of disease that affects the livestock industry;
- 21 c. Dissemination of publication materials and other resources on the prevention
22 of the spread of the disease; and
- 23 d. Raising of public awareness on the early detection and reporting of such
24 diseases and their symptoms as identified by the farmers.

25 *Sec. 5. Annual Report.* – Each Diagnostic Laboratory shall submit to the
26 Department of Agriculture an annual report of its activities and the status of livestock
27 diseases and the measures taken to address and prevent its spread of their respective
28 territorial jurisdictions. The DA shall in turn submit a consolidated report to Congress,

1 which shall also be made available for the public through their official website.

2 *Sec. 6. Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this
3 Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriation of the Department of
4 Agriculture.

5 *Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within one hundred eighty (180)
6 days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture shall issue the
7 necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

8 *Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
9 proclamations, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with
10 the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

11 *Sec. 9. Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act, or the
12 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid,
13 the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

14 *Sec. 10. Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its
15 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
16 circulation.

17 *Approved,*