

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE]
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES]
First Regular Session]

Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
S.B. No. 1004

Introduced by SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING EVACUATION CENTERS IN EVERY MUNICIPALITY
AND CITY, PROVIDING FOR THE NECESSARY FACILITIES,
ENSURING THEIR STRUCTURAL CAPACITY, AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish an evacuation center in every municipality and city in the country and to ensure the structural capacity of evacuation centers.

The Philippines has been frequently affected by climate-related weather events in recent years which have damaged property and caused the loss of many lives. More intense typhoons, higher sea levels, and storm surges have affected a great number of the population. Coastal communities and informal settlements in urban areas are the most vulnerable to floods in times of weather disturbances. Every time a typhoon hits the country or when monsoon rains cause heavy flooding, many people are displaced and need to be relocated to evacuation centers. The importance of a permanent and fully operational evacuation

center with the necessary facilities in place cannot be disregarded during a calamity, whether natural or human-induced, or in times of armed conflict when residents of a community need to be relocated.

In the Philippines, it is a common practice to use schools as evacuation centers in times of calamities which causes the disruption of school activities. Hence, this bill proposes to establish an evacuation center in every municipality and city with priority given to the local government units with the most vulnerable communities and with less secure infrastructure. This measure also emphasizes the need to ensure the structural capacity of existing evacuation centers and those that will be constructed in the future. It is imperative that strict compliance with the National Building Code of the Philippines is observed and that inputs of structural engineers are integrated into the design and specifications of evacuation centers to ensure that it can withstand climatic and other hazards.

It is also recognized that building an evacuation center for all municipalities and cities at the same time is not feasible. Under this measure, the NDRRMC is mandated to determine which municipalities and cities will be given priority and be provided with a new evacuation center. In order to ease the pressure on classrooms of schools already utilized as evacuation centers, constructing additional facilities in these schools is also an option in areas where it will be difficult to have a new evacuation center.

The establishment of permanent evacuation centers with the necessary facilities will address the issues encountered by evacuees including congestion, exposure to hazards and lack of facilities. It will also enhance the delivery of social services during calamities and help minimize the loss of lives.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



WIN GATCHALIAN

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

1 SECTION 1. **Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the
2 "Evacuation Center Act."
3
4 SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** - This Act recognizes the
5 constitutional right of the people for the protection of their life and their
6 property and the promotion of their general welfare. Towards this end,
7 the State, in recognition of the vulnerability of the Philippines to climate
8 change, the occurrence of severe floods, typhoons, and other natural or
9 human-induced disasters, illnesses, diseases and other factors that
10 affect the environment, shall institutionalize the governments' effort to
11 establish and maintain fully equipped and fully-operational evacuation
12 centers and provide the necessary facilities to sites used as evacuation

1 centers to make them responsive to environmental or climatic events.

2
3 Furthermore, it shall be the continuing policy of the State to
4 provide the appropriate facilities for evacuees in evacuation centers and
5 to ensure the structural capacity of evacuation centers.

6
7 **SEC. 3. *Establishment of Evacuation Centers.*** -There shall be
8 established an evacuation center in every city and municipality in the
9 Philippines which shall provide immediate and temporary
10 accommodation for people who have been evacuated or displaced from
11 their homes due to emergency events such as typhoons, floods, storm
12 surges, drought and other severe climate disturbances, as well as fire, and the outbreak
13 of illnesses and diseases that presents imminent
14 danger to life and property.

15
16 **SEC. 4. *Facility Requirements.*** - The following shall be the
17 minimum requirements for every evacuation center that will be
18 established under this Act:

19 a) *Location* - The evacuation center should not be at risk of
20 isolation. It should be located at a safe distance from danger areas or
21 hazards. The Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (LDRRMC) of the
22 local government unit (LGU) concerned shall coordinate
23 with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to
24 determine the appropriate location of the evacuation center.

25
26 The following shall be considered in identifying an ideal site for an evacuation
27 center:

- 28 1) Drainage;
29 2) Elevation;
30 3) Protection from strong winds;
31 4) Accessibility to and proximity from the vulnerable
32 community;
33 5) Availability of the following in the immediate vicinity:

- 1 i) Parking areas for emergency and other vehicles;
- 2 ii) Allocated area for additional portable toilets;
- 3 iii) Storage tanks for potable and non-potable water; and
- 4 iv) Safe shelter for livestock.

5
6 b) *Structural Capacity* - New evacuation centers and improvements in schools
7 used as an evacuation center which will be constructed after the effectivity of this Act
8 must be made of construction materials which are in accordance with the specifications
9 of Republic Act No. 6541, otherwise known as the "*National Building Code of the*
10 *Philippines,*" and be able to withstand wind speeds of three hundred twenty (320)
11 kilometers per hour or two hundred (200) miles per hour and moderate seismic activity
12 of at least 7.2 magnitude.

13 The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall be
14 responsible in formulating the appropriate specifications for evacuation
15 centers and to ensure compliance with these specifications during the
16 construction of evacuation centers. The specifications shall be
17 periodically reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the DPWH every three
18 years.

19 c) *Suitability and Capacity of Premises* - If the building is not
20 primarily a shelter or permanent site as an evacuation center, considerations should
21 be made on its impact to normal business if its
22 operation as an evacuation center is prolonged or its normal function is
23 taken off for an extended period of time.

24 The number and diversity of evacuees as well as public health and
25 safety concerns should be considered in the suitability of the premises.

26 It must likewise be able to provide electricity, back-up power
27 supply, water, sewerage system, solid waste management, and physical
28 mobility for people with mobility aids.

29 d) *Physical Amenities* - The evacuation and relief center should
30 be able to provide the following minimum facilities:

- 31 1. Sleeping area;
- 32 2. Eating area;
- 33 3. Shower and toilet facilities which should accommodate

1 twenty (20) people per shower or toilet room, and should be
2 utilized according to gender;

3 4. Kitchen or food preparation area;

4 5. Trash collection area;

5 6. Clinic area including an isolation area for potentially infectious
6 people;

7 7. Laundry area;

8 8. Recreation area; and

9 9. Pet and livestock holding area.

10
11
12 e) *Food Safety* - Kitchen and dining facilities should be able to
13 cater for the number of people in the evacuation center. Food preparation
14 and storage facilities should comply with satisfactory standards of the
15 Department of Health on cleanliness to minimize the potential for
16 contamination and invasion of insects and pests.

17
18 **SEC. 5. *Priority in the Establishment of Evacuation Centers.*** -
19 The NDRRMC shall, in coordination with local chief executives of
20 provinces, cities, and municipalities, identify areas to be given the
21 highest priority in the establishment of new evacuation centers.

22 Upon determination by the NDRRMC and the chief executives of
23 LGUs, the NDRRMC shall make a priority list of LGUs needing
24 evacuation centers. The frequency of occurrence of calamities, whether
25 natural or human-induced, and the number of displaced persons in the
26 LOU during said calamities in the past three years may be considered in
27 coming up with the priority list.

28
29 **SEC. 6. *Improvement of Schools or Structures Used as***
30 ***Evacuation Centers.*** - When an LGU is included in the priority list of
31 LGUs which need an evacuation center pursuant to Section 5 of this Act
32 and there is no available site where the government can construct a new
33 evacuation center, the NDRRMC may instead consider the improvement

1 of facilities in schools or other structures already being used as
2 evacuation center by the LOU to make it comply with the provisions of
3 Section 4 of this Act, particularly on the requirement on location and
4 structural capacity.

5
6 **SEC. 7. Role of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and**
7 **Management Council.** - The National Disaster Risk Reduction and
8 Management Council (NDRRMC) shall be the lead agency in
9 implementing this Act. It shall ensure that the requirements of this Act
10 are faithfully complied with.

11
12 **SEC. 8. Coordination Among Agencies.** - The NDRRMC shall
13 coordinate with the DPWH and the Department of Science and
14 Technology with regard the design specifications, cost estimates and
15 construction details of new evacuation centers that will be constructed
16 pursuant to this Act.

17 All government agencies and instrumentalities, when necessary,
18 shall provide assistance to the NDRRMC to ensure the effective and
19 efficient implementation of this Act.

20
21 **SEC. 9. Operation and Maintenance of Evacuation Centers.** -
22 The operation and management of evacuation centers shall be under the
23 auspices of the LGU where the evacuation center is situated while the
24 DPWH shall be charged with the maintenance of evacuation centers that
25 will be constructed under this Act.

26 The local Sanggunian shall promulgate guidelines and procedures
27 for the use and operation of the evacuation centers under their
28 jurisdiction. The guidelines shall include provisions on the use of the
29 evacuation center when it is not being utilized as an evacuation center
30 including its utilization as a classroom, livelihood center, youth center,
31 or multi-purpose center to benefit the constituents of the LGU.

32 The Department of Education shall be charged with maintaining
33 the additional facilities of schools which will be constructed in

1 accordance with Section 6 of this Act.

2

3 SEC. 10. **Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the
4 implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations of the
5 Department of Public Works and Highways with respect to the construction and
6 maintenance of new evacuation centers. For this purpose, the DPWH shall include in
7 its programs and annual budget the maintenance of evacuation centers constructed
8 under this Act.

9 The amount necessary for the operation of the evacuation centers
10 shall be charged to the funds of the LDRRMC.

11 The construction and maintenance of additional facilities for
12 schools already used as evacuation centers shall be charged to the
13 appropriations for the Department of Education. Thereafter, such
14 amount needed by the concerned Department for the continued
15 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General
16 Appropriations Act.

17

18 SEC. 11. **Separability Clause.** - If any provision or part of this
19 Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or
20 provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

21

22 SEC. 12. **Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules
23 and regulations, and other issuances inconsistent with this Act are
24 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

25

26 SEC. 13. **Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
27 days after publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general
28 circulation.

Approved,