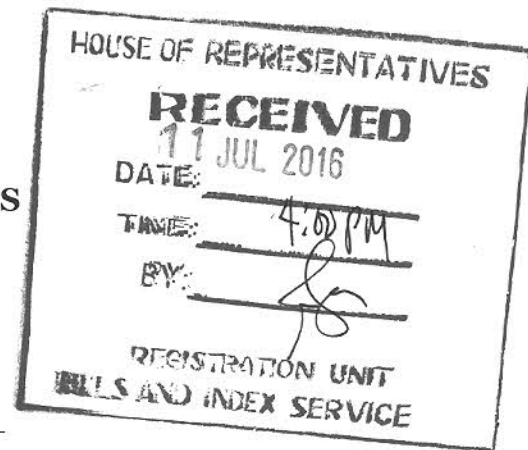


*Republic of the Philippines*  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1374**



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Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT EVACUATION CENTERS IN EVERY PROVINCE, CITY, MUNICIPALITY AND OTHER STRATEGIC AREAS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Global Climate Risk Index 2014: Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Events? Weather-Related Loss Events in 2012 and 1993 to 2012 published by Berlin-based environmental organization Germanwatch places the Philippines in the top 3 countries most affected by climate-related weather catastrophes in 2012. According to the ninth annual Global Climate Risk Index, the Philippines came in second only to Haiti in terms of "relative and absolute number of human victims, and relative and absolute economic damage" caused by natural disasters.

The country is prone to disasters and hazards due to its geography and geology. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) provides the following facts, which are instructive regarding the occurrence of disasters and hazards in the country:

- Tropical cyclones and its sequential effects of rain and windstorms, as well as floods are the most prevalent types of hydro-meteorological hazards in the country. Between 1997 and 2007, eighty-four (84) tropical cyclones entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR). These typhoons resulted to a total of 13,155 in human casualty and more than 51 million families have been affected.

- Environmental factors such as denuded forests aggravate flood risks. Even now, the effects of loose soil and reduced forest cover from past forestry activities are felt in frequent landslides and floods. Recent events show that the annual monsoon season in the country has brought severe flooding in most areas.

- In 2011, most of the disasters that claimed the lives of people and affected properties and livelihoods of the most vulnerable were brought about by increased rainfall which caused massive flash flooding in areas which don't normally experience such.

- ... the Philippines is situated along a highly seismic area lying along the Pacific Ring of Fire and is highly-prone to earthquakes. According to the Philippine Institute on Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVLOCS), the country experiences an average of five (5) earthquakes a day. Earthquake disasters are not as frequent as the typhoons and flooding that take place in the Philippines. Nevertheless, the impact generated on affected communities is usually massive and devastating.

- The Philippines is ... prone to volcanic eruptions being situated along the Pacific Ring of Fire where two major tectonic plates (Philippine Sea and Eurasian) meet. This explains the occurrence of earthquakes and tsunamis and the existence of around 300 volcanoes of which 22 are active.

- In an analysis of natural disaster hotspots by the Hazard Management Unit of the World Bank in 2005, the Philippines is among the countries where large percentages of population reside in disaster prone areas. In the 2011 World Risk Report published by United Nations University and the Institute of Environment and Human Security, looking into the four components of risk (exposure, susceptibility, coping and adapt capacities), the Philippines is the third most disaster risk country worldwide.


- Aside from natural causes, the country also experiences human-induced disasters. These are brought about by hazards that are of political and socio-economic origins, among others. Many are forced to evacuate during times of conflict. Violence continues to plague the country, with most of the fighting in the South. Intense fighting between government forces and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) during the first half of year 2009 resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. The government and the MILF decided to lay down their arms and work toward peace accord that had failed in 2009 in Malaysia. On the other hand, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), labelled a terrorist organization, continued to carry out bombings and rebels were killed during clashes with the military in the latter part of 2009. These human-induced disasters caused by armed fightings in the South continue to threaten the security of civilian communities which result into the displacement of thousands of civilians. So long as there is no peace settlement mechanism in Mindanao, internally displaced civilians will remain a given collateral damage of every armed conflict. Such disasters consequently cause public anxiety, loss of lives, destruction of properties and sometimes socio-political stability.

In view of the foregoing, this measure aims to establish standard-based relief shelters and sites throughout the country with the end in view of decongesting temporary evacuation centers in public schools and private facilities. The bill addresses the need to prioritize the needs of vulnerable individuals and groups. Congestion in most evacuation centers usually puts at risk senior citizens, the disabled, children and pregnant women who are more vulnerable to diseases. Moreover, this proposal can minimize the loss of lives by bringing the evacuation centers nearer to the populace and at the most accessible and safe areas.

Due to the country's vulnerability to natural disasters, it is imperative to device long-term response to this unpleasant situation by establishing permanent evacuation centers throughout the country consistent with the identified outcomes of the NDRRMP, particularly in providing adequate temporary shelters.

The NDRRMP specifically states that, "Disasters leave many people homeless. Temporary shelters in some ways provide a measure of comfort safety for victims. The provision of adequate temporary shelters is of invaluable importance during cataclysmic times. It is about a temporary "home" where people, their sources of livelihoods and important valuables find refuge in times of disasters. Temporary shelters are not just about structures – a lot of things need to be considered both before, during and after a disaster happens."

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.**  
4th District, Quezon

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

**SECTION 1. *Declaration of State Policy.*** - It is the policy of the State to uphold the people’s constitutional right to life by addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities to disasters, strengthening the country’s institutional capacity for building the resilience of local communities to disasters including climate change impacts, and adhere to and adopt the universal norms, principles and standards of humanitarian assistance as concrete expression of the country’s commitment to overcome human sufferings due to recurring disasters.

Towards this end, it shall provide for the establishment of permanent evacuation centers throughout the country that will guarantee the safety, well-being and dignity of victims of natural or man-made disasters, particularly pregnant women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

**SEC. 2. *Establishment of Permanent Evacuation Centers.*** – Within five (5) years after the effectivity of this Act, there shall be established a permanent evacuation center in every province, city, municipality and other strategic areas throughout the country.

Permanent evacuation centers must have the following essential facilities:

- (a) a centralized kitchen and laundry areas;
- (b) a clinic;
- (c) a stockroom;
- (d) a paging system room with security camera;
- (e) an office for social welfare personnel;
- (f) a generator;
- (g) gender-sensitive areas for women, specifically breastfeeding mothers;
- (h) separate comfort rooms for male and female;
- (i) a counseling area;
- (j) a garbage segregation facility;
- (k) a child friendly space and learning area;

- (l) spaces for people's livestock, poultry and pets;
- (m) stockroom for relief goods;
- (n) storm shelters as may be appropriate and necessary; and
- (o) other essential facilities as may be determined by the implementing agency

SEC. 3. *Role of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Local Government Units (LGUs).* - The establishment of permanent evacuation centers shall be undertaken by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, hereafter referred to as the Department. It shall give utmost priority to those areas of the country that are (a) identified as disaster prone; (b) financially incapable to establish their own evacuation centers; and (c) do not have existing evacuation centers of their own.

The Department shall consider the weather pattern, topographical features and climate among other essential physical characteristics, including unique social condition in the design and construction of permanent evacuation centers in every province, city, municipality and other strategic areas of the country to ensure that they shall withstand all weather conditions and address the need of disaster victims for humane temporary shelters.

The Department shall enter into memoranda of agreement (MOA) with the concerned local government units (LGUs) for the maintenance, operation and management of a permanent evacuation center in their respective areas of jurisdiction. It shall provide technical assistance and support services to these LGUs in the management of evacuation centers.

Local chief executives concerned shall evaluate and provide suitable sites for evacuation centers to determine their geographical suitability, geological stability, and public accessibility in times of disasters. They shall provide for the maintenance, operation and management of the center taking into consideration the goal of providing life preservation and meeting the basic subsistence needs of affected population based on acceptable standards during or immediately after a disaster.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Agency.* - The Department shall be the overall implementing agency for this Act, which shall coordinate with the respective LGUs.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* - The Department in consultation, coordination and collaboration with the Department of Interior and Local Government shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, prepare the implementing rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* - The amount of ten billion pesos (P10,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the initial implementation of this Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the establishment of permanent evacuation center throughout the country shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended

SEC. 9. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation whichever comes earlier.

Approved,