

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House Bill No. **3881**



Introduced by: **Rep. GREG G. GASATAYA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The ideal number of firefighters according to the ratio being practiced by the BFP is 1 fireman for every 2,000 population, which means that the BFP needs about 50,000 personnel, since as of this date, the country has an estimated 100 million population. However, at present, the BFP is composed of 18,769 firefighters only, which has a shortfall of 31,231 personnel. Therefore, our regular firefighting force all over the country is undermanned. There are 12 to 13 fire stations and fire sub-stations for every 1 million people in the country in 2010-2011. On the average, each fire station/sub-station in the Philippines responded to 9 fire incidents in 2010 and 7 fire incidents in 2011, or less than one fire incident per month according to the BFP. This unfortunate situation brings about initiative from volunteer fire brigades and civic organizations to provide valued reinforcement with selfless regard to their own safety; such volunteerism deserves to be honored and appreciated by the government.

It is with that intention that this bill seeks to provide financial assistance and benefits to volunteer firefighters of duly recognized fire brigades or civic organizations and members of barangay fire brigades trained by the Bureau who are at times injured and harmed in the line of their duties. It is also necessary to give hospitalization benefits to those who are seriously hurt and incapacitated. To further recognize their dedication and selfless service, the volunteer casualties shall be accorded burial honors similar to that of regular firefighters of the BFP.

As such, the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.



REP. GREG G. GASATAYA
Lone District, Bacolod City

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**AN ACT GIVING SPECIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS TO
VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS WHO PERISH OR SUSTAIN INJURIES WHILE
SAVING LIVES OR PROPERTIES DURING FIRES OR ANY CALAMITY, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the “Volunteer Firefighters Act of 2016”.

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall refer to and/or mean as hereunder defined:

- a. “Volunteer Firefighter” refers to a member of a duly recognized fire brigade or civic organization, or a member of a barangay fire brigade, who voluntarily risks his life for the protection and safety of others during conflagration or calamities.
- b. “Duly recognized Fire Brigade and Civic Organization” refers to a properly organized private fire brigade, accredited with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and registered with the Bureau of Fire Protection including barangay fire brigades recognized and trained by the said Bureau.
- c. “Special Assistance and Benefits” refers to financial benefits including hospitalization and/or funeral benefits in favor of a deceased, incapacitated, or injured firefighter.

SECTION 3. A special financial assistance and benefits, in addition to any financial assistance given by the volunteer fire brigade or civic group they belong to, shall be given to a volunteer firefighter who perishes or sustains injuries in the line of his duty.

SECTION 4. A "Special Volunteer Firefighters' Fund" shall be created in the Bureau of Fire Protection central office under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). Such shall be funded by the savings from the DILG, the fire fund collected by local government units for the issuance of building permits, and by the donations from charitable institutions to the government. *Provided that*, within one (1) year from the approval of this Act, these funds shall constitute the initial reserve fund for its purpose.

SECTION 5. In the event when a volunteer firefighter is wounded or injured in the process of performing his duties, the government, through the Special Volunteer Firefighters' Fund, shall provide medical care in any government hospitals. The extent of which shall be determined by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of this Act.

SECTION 6. In cases of death of a volunteer firefighter while in the line of duty, his compulsory heirs, as provided under Article 887 of the New Civil Code, shall receive an amount as determined by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of this Act.

SECTION 7. The Bureau is responsible for the delivery of the amount to the heirs of the deceased firefighter.

SECTION 8. The deceased firefighter shall be given the same burial honors accorded to a regular firefighter of the Bureau. It is to be supervised by the Bureau in coordination with the duly recognized fire brigade or organization concerned.

SECTION 9. The Bureau shall promulgate the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days from its effectivity.

SECTION 10. Any portion or provision of this Act which may be declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof.

SECTION 11. All other laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED,



REP. GREG G. GASATAYA
Lone District, Bacolod City