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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 5259



Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING IN EVERY TWO TO THREE CONTIGUOUS BARANGAYS AN
EVACUATION CENTER THAT IS BIG ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE THE
TARGET POPULATION, STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND NATURAL
CALAMITIES AND SITUATED AWAY FROM WATERS
AND LANDSLIDE-PRONE AREAS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is a fact we have to accept and live by that climate change has transformed natural calamities into more disastrous and more deadly types. Thus we have to start adjusting to this reality and take positive steps to mitigate, to the least possible, effects of disasters that might be even worse than we could imagine.

Nobody ever thought that the strong winds released by typhoon Yolanda would reach sustained winds of up to a record-breaking 315 kph. Before Yolanda, the world strongest recorded by far was Hurricane Camille in 1969 with 305 kph of sustained winds (Wikipedia). Coupled by a storm surge that brought waters rising up to almost 20 feet high, nobody among the victims ever imagined that it would be like the more familiar tsunami that inundated everything and literally flattened their communities the moment it subsided.

Some school buildings which were made as evacuation centers during the pre-emptive evacuation in some areas in Visayas for typhoon Yolanda were also not spared because of the misinformation of a storm surge. Numerous evacuees actually died in the said school buildings.

Schools have always been used as evacuation centers. The problem is that schools are not made to accommodate families in distress because these are not usually equipped with enough facilities such as comfort rooms, kitchens, or sleeping areas to lessen the discomfort of families having to leave their homes so to save their lives.

In fact, schools must not be used as evacuation centers because the children's education are the most affected especially in situations when things should have started to get normal but families cannot yet vacate the school premises because their houses have not yet been repaired nor

1 constructed. This practice of using schools as evacuation centers has to stop to cushion the
2 impact of calamities and disasters especially on the children.

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4 In the absence still of a comprehensive disaster reduction and risk plan, it is imperative that
5 evacuation centers be constructed in a location, that serves as center to two or three contiguous
6 barangays, strong enough to withstand typhoons like Yolanda and are climate change-adaptive.

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8 As lesson learned from Yolanda and even from previous typhoons that had wrought almost the
9 same damage to affected areas, evacuation centers should be constructed in areas at a distance
10 safe from waters and landslide-prone areas.

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12 Lives have been wasted because of the negligence on the part of the government to ensure that a
13 program for the disaster preparedness and risk reduction would really lessen the impact of
14 calamities on the lives of the people.

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16 Meantime, the fact that the Philippines is a country often visited by typhoons yearly, the
17 government has to undertake measures while waiting for the completion of a comprehensive
18 program and its eventual implementation. We can save lives by ensuring that sturdy and
19 typhoon-resilient, climate change-adaptive evacuation centers are located at a distance safe from
20 waters and landslide-prone areas in every two to three contiguous barangays.

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22 This bill was first filed by Bayan Muna Partylist Representative Neri Colmenares in the 16th
23 Congress, and refiled by Bayan Muna Partylist Representative Carlos Isagani Zarate in the 17th
24 Congress.

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26 Based on the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

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30 *Approved,*

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39 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
40 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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45 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**
46 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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50 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
Bayan Muna Partylist

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2 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3 Quezon City

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5 EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
6 First Regular Session

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11 Introduced by
12 BAYAN MUNA Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
13 FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
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17 AN ACT
18 ESTABLISHING IN EVERY TWO TO THREE CONTIGUOUS BARANGAYS A
19 PERMANENT EVACUATION CENTER (PEC) THAT IS BIG ENOUGH TO
20 ACCOMMODATE THE TARGET POPULATION, STRONG ENOUGH TO
21 WITHSTAND NATURAL CALAMITIES AND SITUATED AWAY FROM WATERS
22 AND LANDSLIDE-PRONE AREAS, WHICH SHALL LIKEWISE SERVE AS THE
23 CENTRAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MANAGEMENT INSTITUTION PER
24 RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES
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26 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*
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28 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.**— It is the policy of the State to uphold the people's
29 constitutional rights to life and property by strengthening both the institutional capacity of the
30 country's disaster risk reduction and management policy and the resilience of our communities
31 against disasters through the creation of social infrastructures such as permanent evacuation
32 centers.
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34 **SECTION 2. Establishment of Community-based Permanent Evacuation Centers.**—
35 There shall be created a permanent evacuation center located in the center of every two to three
36 contiguous barangays nationwide to accommodate the population of the contiguous
37 communities in times of disasters.

38 These evacuation centers shall be designed to withstand wind speed of at least 300
39 kilometers per hour and moderate seismic activity of at least 8.0-magnitude. Evacuation centers
40 should have the following essential facilities and equipment:

- 41 a) Cubicles which could house at least five (5) families;
42 b) Restrooms;
43 c) Centralized kitchen and laundry areas;
44 d) A generator;
45 e) Sufficient water supply;
46 f) DRRM training facilities;
47 g) Rainwater catchment system;

- h) A clinic which will house sufficient and necessary medical equipment, as well as a counseling area;
- i) Offices for Social welfare and Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (LDDRMC) personnel;
- j) Appropriate natural ventilations;
- k) Stockroom for relief goods; and
- l) Such other physical provisions guaranteeing humane conditions for evacuees

SECTION 3. *Site Location.*—In the selection of sites of the evacuation centers, the agencies herein mentioned should consider site stability and susceptibility to landslide or flooding based on the latest vulnerability and risk assessment and geohazard maps of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. They shall also put prime consideration on public accessibility and the community-based present within the targeted area for construction.

SECTION 4. *PECs as Central DRRM Institutions of Communities.*—To further realize DRRM in its community-based orientation, permanent evacuation centers shall serve as the central DRRM institution of communities, as an institute to train and ready communities for disasters. The LDDRMC shall regularly hold DRRM training activities and information campaign at their respective PECs. The permanent evacuation center shall likewise house the LDDRMC operation center, to further integrate the national and local DRRM agencies and policies to the communities;

SECTION 5. *Operations and Maintenance of Evacuation Centers.*—Upon completion of the permanent evacuation center, the NDRRMC shall turn over the same to the respective Local Government Units (LGUs) which shall then have the responsibility over the management, operations and maintenance of their respective permanent evacuation centers. The NDDRMC and the LGUs shall enter a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to maintain the national-local coordination in ensuring that the standards and qualifications in the establishment and maintenance of the permanent evacuation centers are regularly met.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.*—The NDRRMC shall be the lead agency in ensuring that the requirements for such an evacuation center are met in accordance with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan. The lead agency shall coordinate with the Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Public Works and Highways in the planning and construction of such facilities.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*—The NDRRMC 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;

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* — The amount of Ten Billion Pesos (P10,000,000,000) is hereby appropriated to the NDRRMC for the initial implementation of this Act. The lead agency shall first prioritize areas that are identified as disaster prone. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the establishment of permanent evacuation centers throughout the whole country shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, executive and administrative orders or parts thereof, inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1 **SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.***—This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following
2 the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general
3 circulation.
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6 *Approved,*