

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2646



Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY ANNUAL INSPECTION OF ALL PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE SCHOOL BUILDINGS BY THE CITY OR MUNICIPAL ENGINEER OR
BUILDING OFFICIAL AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The collapse of the three-storey Evangelical Promise school building in Petion Ville, a suburb located in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, last November 7, 2008 left at least 50 dead and hundreds injured with many still trapped in the rubbles for days.

The tragedy is reminiscent of the collapse of the Central Colleges of the Philippines school building in Cabanatuan, Nueva Ejica during the July 1990 earthquake as well as the more recent collapse of numerous school buildings in the wake of 7.9-magnitude earthquake in China's southwestern province of Sichuan last May 12, 2008.

As a preemptive and preventive measure and to minimize, if not totally avoid the occurrence of similar tragedies in the Philippines in the future, the proponents believe that it would be prudent to institute the annual mandatory inspection of all school buildings in the country. This could be done economically, using existing local government resources and/or personnel, and would go a long way in ensuring the suitability, safety and structural of the buildings being used by school children and young students all over the country.

It is in this light that early passage of this legislative measure is respectfully enjoined.


DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur


GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “School Building
Safety Act of 2013.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared that it is the
policy of the State to ensure the safety, security, suitability and structural integrity
of each and every school building in the country at the beginning of each school
year to ensure that the same are safe, secure, appropriate and suitably for use
by the school children and students intended to use the same.

SECTION 3. *Mandatory Annual Inspection.* – It shall be the principal duty
of the City Engineer or the Municipal Engineer and/or the Building Official of each
and every City or Municipality in the country to conduct an annual inspection of
all school buildings, whether private or public, within their territorial jurisdiction at
least forty-five (45) days prior to the start of each and every school year. The
purpose of such inspection shall be to ensure the safety, security, suitability and
structural integrity all school buildings for use by school children and/or students
for the purpose or purposes for which the same are intended.

SECTION 4. *Report.* – Within three (3) days after the inspection, the City or Municipal Engineer or Building Official shall render a comprehensive report disclosing his findings and recommendations for each and every school building inspected which should cover the following matters, to wit:

(a) The structural integrity of the building and its fitness to be used for the purpose/s it is intended, including its capacity to accommodate the number of students or persons intended to use the same, including the capacity of the building to withstand earthquakes and typhoons and similar natural occurrences; and

(b) The level of suitability and/or safety of the building for use by school children and/or students taking into account the availability of sufficient comfort rooms, proper ventilation and lighting, garbage disposal facilities, fire safety equipment, etc.;

(c) The repairs, improvements, renovations and/or changes recommended by the City or Municipal Engineer or Building Official to address noted defects and/or deficiencies to ensure the safety, suitability and/or structural integrity of the building for use of school children and/or students;

The report shall also make a determination of whether or not the building is suitable for use by school children or students for the purpose it is intended during the upcoming school year.

The report shall be addressed to the City or Municipal Mayor, copy furnished the local Superintendent of Schools, the Principal of the school concerned, the local Department of Education (DepEd) or Commission on Higher Education (CHED) offices as well as the Sangguniang Panlungsod or Sangguniang Bayan and Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

SECTION 5. *Defects And Deficiencies.* – In case defects and/or deficiencies are noted or reported by the City or Municipal Engineer or the Building Official, it shall be the duty of the Principal of the school as well as the local DepEd and/or CHED officials concerned to take the appropriate action to ensure that the defects and/or deficiencies noted and/or reported are properly addressed, corrected, repaired and/or rectified at the soonest time possible and before the beginning of the school year. On the other hand, it shall be the duty of the City or Municipal Mayor to oversee that the said defects and/or deficiencies are corrected, repaired and/or rectified before the beginning of the school year.

SECTION 6. *Unsuitable, Unfit Or Unsafe Buildings.* – In case the City or Municipal Engineer or the Building Officials has made a determination that a school building is unsuitable, unfit or unsafe for use by school children or students, the same shall not be used until after the necessary repair work has

been undertaken and completed and until the same has received the approval of the City or Municipal Engineer after re-inspection. In such a case, it shall be the duty of the Principal concerned, together with the City or Municipal Mayor, the local DepEd and/or CHED officials and/or the owners of the school in case of private schools to look for another suitable for the temporary use of the affected school children and/or students.

SECTION 7. *Highest Priority.* – Considering the public interest involved, the annual inspection of all school buildings located within their territorial jurisdiction shall be the highest priority of City or Municipal Engineers and/or Building Officials except in case of calamities and/or local or national emergencies and disasters. Failure of a City or Municipal Engineer or Building Official to undertake the annual inspection mandated by this Act shall constitute dereliction of duty and may be a basis for removal from office of the City or Municipal Engineer or Building Official concerned.

The DepEd, CHED and concerned local government unit/s and/or private institutions and individuals concerned are required to give the highest budgetary priority to the repairs and/or rectification of defects and deficiencies noted and reported in the Report issued pursuant to Section 4 hereof.

SECTION 8. *Penal Provisions.* – Any person who refuses to act on the report and/or recommendations of the City or Municipal Engineer or Building Official rendered pursuant to Section 4 of this Act shall suffer a penalty of Six (6) months to Two (2) Years of imprisonment and/or a fine from Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) or both, at the discretion of the Court plus perpetual disqualification from holding public office.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act or the applicability of such provision to any person or circumstance shall be held invalid, the validity of the other provisions of this Act and the applicability of such provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive issuances, orders and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act, or any part thereof, are hereby repealed, amended and/or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,