

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **7372**



Introduced by Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In November 2014, around 200 Informal Settler Families (ISF) voluntarily moved from their homes in dangerous waterway areas in Metro Manila to safer areas within the city. The transfer of these families represented the culmination of an activity that began in mid-2013 by the *Coalitions for Change* (CfC) program, a partnership between the Australian Embassy and The Asia Foundation.¹

In 2011, the Aquino administration announced a Php 50 billion fund (AUD 1.5 billion) to provide on-site or in-city housing for an estimated 100,000 ISF living in areas vulnerable to flooding in Manila. By 2013 however, progress in relocation was slow and it became evident that this goal was ambitious within the context of existing policies and programs. For example, most ISF communities had cleared only the first of a 13 step process for in-city relocations, which involved submitting a housing project proposal with supporting documents, including an official request for financing, land data, and cost estimates. In addition, CfC estimate that the National Housing Authority (NHA), the main agency tasked to build homes, had historically produced only about 3,000 houses per year. This rate is significantly short of the requirement to build 20,000 homes per year to move all ISF by the end of the Aquino administration in mid-2016.²

This impasse is largely attributable to the government's focus on home ownership, which is almost unachievable considering physical and human constraints. Thus, there has to be a paradigm shift on the solution.

Rental subsidy is readily doable. By granting ISF financial assistance, they can immediately leave their dangerous and abject condition and merge with mainstream populace within the city. This, with all its practicability, would even spur the local economy and urban planning. House rental business would be more vibrant and thriving. The government only needs to lay out a clear cut policy on the delineation and extent of the subsidy to effect an equitable rental assistance.

The immediate passage of this timely measure is most earnestly sought.

WINNIE CASTELO

¹ Coalitions For Change and DSWD: Finding New Solutions to Safely House Informal Settler Families, April 2016, p. 1

² Ibid.

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A RENTAL SUBSIDY PROGRAM FOR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES
(ISF) IN METRO MANILA AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Rental Subsidy Program for ISF in Metro Manila Act."

SEC. 2. A Rental Subsidy Program for Informal Settler Families (ISF) in Metro Manila shall hereby be established with the end in view of enabling them to lead decent lives and integrating them to mainstream society.

SEC. 3. To fully implement the provisions of this Act, the National Housing Authority (NHA), in close coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), shall issue rules, regulations, guidelines necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Act.

SEC. 4. The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations for the National Housing Authority under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,