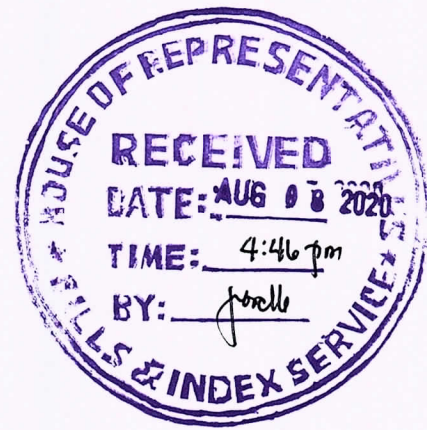


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7324



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On January 12, 2020, the Philippines witnessed the phreatic eruption of the Taal Volcano. That afternoon, the volcano spewed an ash column, and by 7:30 P.M. of that day, it generated a steam-laden tephra column that caused wet ashfall to rain on nearby towns, reaching as far up as Quezon City and Caloocan. Cavite, Laguna, Pampanga, and various cities in Metro Manila also experienced ashfall that night and the day after.

The next day, PHILVOCS reported sporadic lava fountaining and hydrovolcanic activity at the main crater. The air quality index in the nearby towns has worsened, and the amount of ash deposited on top of structures and residential homes caused many to collapse. Families have been displaced, and the towns were left in shock and disarray. Even Metro Manila was not spared from the dangerous ashfall.

The aftermath of the volcanic eruption is not without problems. The displaced families needed to occupy several schools and other properties as their temporary evacuation centers. And while we are grateful for the school officials and other property owners who opened their gates for the evacuees, we know that we can still do better. Schools are not fully equipped to handle evacuation operations because its structures and facilities are not built for such functions.

The eruption of Taal is a wakeup call for us. The local government units affected exerted their best efforts and we laud them for that, but we have to be ready for what is next. We have to establish measures which will ensure that our disaster response is more organized, more systematic, and is ready to be implemented the second a disaster strikes. Time is of the essence when disaster and calamities happen. Wasted time means lives lost and properties destroyed.

Thus, a long-term solution is needed, and it is this representation's belief that the establishment of permanent community-based evacuation

1 centers would sufficiently address a number of problems that we encounter
2 in times of disaster. These permanent community-based evacuation centers
3 will have all the necessary facilities to house our people, medical personnel,
4 social workers, goods, and even animals. No classes would be disrupted due
5 to the need for space for the evacuees. The relief efforts will be more systematic
6 because of the centralized location of evacuees. Evacuation efforts will be
7 easier because the people themselves know where they ought to stay. These
8 and more are being sought by the passage of this bill, and it is hoped that the
9 establishment of community-based evacuation centers would soon be a reality
10 for the benefit of our fellow Filipinos.



ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS

Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party-List

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AN ACT
MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED
PERMANENT EVACUATION CENTERS

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

SECTION 1. *Short title.* – This act shall be known as the “Community-Based Evacuation Centers Act of 2020.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the state to uphold and protect the people’s right to life and property through strengthening the country’s disaster risk reduction and management policies, as well as improving the capacity of communities to respond to and recover from calamities and natural disasters.

SECTION 3. *Establishment of community-based permanent evacuation centers* – A community-based permanent evacuation center shall be constructed in the center of every two or three contiguous barangays nationwide which shall accommodate the population of the said two or three contiguous barangays in times of disaster or calamity.

SECTION 4. *Specifications of the community-based permanent evacuation centers* – The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall formulate the appropriate specifications and construct the evacuation centers based on the said specifications.

The DPWH shall consider the relevant factors existing in each locality in the choice of location and design of the evacuation centers. They shall seek the advice of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regarding the most suitable location for the evacuation centers using the latter’s expertise on geohazard mapping.

1 The DPWH shall also secure the guidance of the Department of Science
2 and Technology (DOST) and Department of Energy (DOE) for the available
3 sustainable technology that may be installed in every evacuation center.
4

5 SECTION 5. *Mandatory facilities inside every community-based*
6 *evacuation center.* – The community-based evacuation centers shall include
7 the following essential facilities:
8

- 9 (a) centralized kitchen and laundry area;
- 10
- 11 (b) medical station, including a counseling area;
- 12
- 13 (c) sufficient ventilation and lighting;
- 14
- 15 (d) at least one (1) generator;
- 16
- 17 (e) garbage segregation area;
- 18
- 19 (f) shelter for pets, livestock and poultry with provisions for food and
- 20 sanitation within a reasonable distance from the evacuation center;
- 21
- 22 (g) stockroom for relief goods;
- 23
- 24 (h) breastfeeding areas for mothers, which shall include a refrigerator,
- 25 lavatory with running warm water, and a bottle warmer; and
- 26
- 27 (i) separate comfort rooms and shower areas for males and females.
- 28

29 SECTION 6. *Operation and maintenance of the community-based*
30 *evacuation centers.* – The LGUs, through their appropriate departments, and
31 in close coordination with the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and
32 Management Council (PDRRMC), shall operate and manage the use of the
33 permanent evacuation centers and ensure that the facilities and equipment
34 within the evacuation centers are in working condition at all times. The DPWH
35 shall be in charge with the maintenance of the infrastructure of the
36 evacuation centers, the structures within, and the shelters for evacuated
37 animals constructed under this Act.
38

39 SECTION 7. *Use of evacuation centers for other purposes.* – The local
40 *sanggunian* shall promulgate rules and procedures for the use and operation
41 of the evacuation center. The local *sanggunian* may allow the use of the
42 evacuation center for other purposes; *Provided* that the use shall be for
43 activities with a duration not exceeding one (1) month and that the permission
44 may be revoked any time should a disaster or calamity require its immediate
45 use, and that the installations which the lessee shall use therein may easily
46 be uninstalled and removed from within the evacuation center; *Provided*
47 *further* that the income generated from the use of the evacuation center shall
48 accrue to the city or municipality disaster fund which shall be used solely for

1 the purposes of maintaining the structures and facilities within the
2 evacuation centers and providing aid in times of disaster.

3
4 SECTION 8. *Allocation.* – The amount necessary for the implementation
5 of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations of the DPWH with respect
6 to the construction and maintenance of the evacuation centers. For this
7 purpose, the DPWH shall include in its program and annual budget the
8 maintenance of the evacuation centers established under this Act.

9
10 The operating and maintenance expenses for the facilities and
11 equipment within the evacuation centers shall be charged to the funds of the
12 PDRPMC and the income from the rental of the evacuation centers.

13
14 Thereafter, such sums as may be required by the concerned agencies
15 for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual
16 General Appropriations Act.

17
18 SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is
19 held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected
20 shall remain in full force and effect.

21
22 SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders,
23 presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders,
24 rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this
25 Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

26
27 SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
28 days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general
29 circulation.

30
31 Approved,