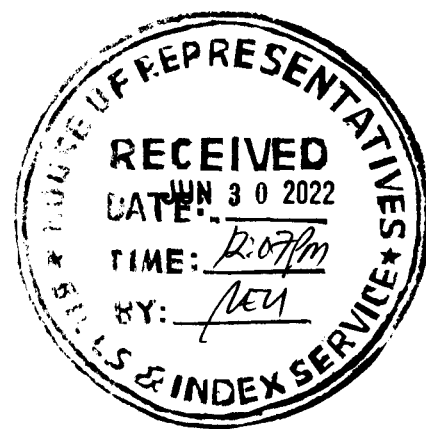




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 16

**Introduced by Representatives FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ,
YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ and JUDE A. ACIDRE**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Global Climate Risk Index 2014 published by Berlin-based environmental organization German watch places the Philippines in the top 3 countries most affected by climate-related weather catastrophes. According to the ninth annual Global Climate Risk Index, the Philippines came in second to Haiti in terms of “relative and absolute number of human victims, and relative and absolute economic damage” caused by natural disasters.

The country is prone to disasters and hazards due to its geography and geology. In an analysis of natural disaster hotspots by the Hazard Management Unit of the Worldbank in 2005, the Philippines is among the countries where large percentages of population reside in disaster prone areas. In the 2011 World Risk Report published by United Nations University and the Institute of Environment and Human Security, looking into the four components of risk (exposure, susceptibility, coping and adapt capacities), the Philippines is the third most disaster risk country worldwide.

Schools have traditionally been utilized as default evacuation centers in times of calamities, disasters, conflicts and emergencies. Schools, however, are not well-equipped to accommodate evacuees since these lack the necessary facilities for displaced families.

The use of schools as evacuation centers for displaced families also gives rise to another group of displaced individuals: the students. The education of children is adversely affected when displaced families cannot immediately vacate school premises because their houses have not yet been repaired or reconstructed.

This relegates students to makeshift classrooms that may not be conducive to learning. Moreover, its cost can take away from the meager budget what could be better utilized for more permanent solutions to problems brought about by disasters.

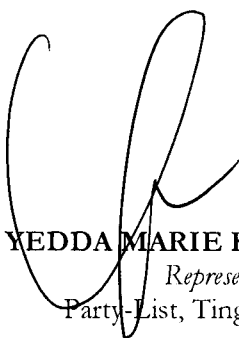
This proposed measure aims to establish standard-based evacuation centers in every city and municipality with the end view of decongesting temporary evacuation centers in public schools and private facilities. Congestion in most evacuation centers usually puts at risk senior citizens, the disabled, children and pregnant women who are more vulnerable to diseases. The construction of evacuation centers in the country's 1,488 municipalities' and 146 cities nationwide will be a permanent recourse for evacuation in times of calamities and natural or man-made disasters. With the reality of stronger typhoons brought about by climate change and the geographical location of the Philippines making it the second most disaster-prone country, seeking temporary solutions to the displacement of families by using schools as evacuation centers must be stopped. There should be no tradeoff between protecting lives and the education of students. The provision of adequate evacuation centers is of invaluable importance during cataclysmic times.

This measure was filed during the 18th Congress by Representatives Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, Romeo S. Momo, Sr. and Lucy Torres-Gomez.

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



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Introduced by Representatives **FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ,**
YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ and JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING EVACUATION CENTERS IN EVERY CITY AND
MUNICIPALITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SEC. 1. Declaration of Policy.** – It shall be the policy of the State to uphold the
2 constitutional right of the people for the protection of their life and property and the promotion
3 of the general welfare. Towards this end, the State, shall establish and maintain a fully-equipped
4 and fully-operational evacuation center, responsive to environmental or climatic events, in
5 recognition of the vulnerability of the Philippines to climate change, the occurrence of severe
6 floods, typhoons, and other natural or human-induced disasters, illnesses, diseases and other
7 factors that affect the environment.

8
9 **SEC. 2. Establishment of Evacuation Centers.** – There shall be established an
10 evacuation center in every city and municipality in the country which shall provide immediate and
11 temporary accommodation for people who have been evacuated or displaced from their homes
12 due to emergency events such as typhoons, floods, storm surges, drought and other severe climate
13 disturbances, as well as fire, and the outbreak of illnesses and diseases that present imminent
14 danger to life and property.

15 Existing structures that would meet the minimum requirements or could be upgraded to
16 effectively serve as evacuation centers could be designated as such in compliance with the local
17 government unit concerned.

18
19 **SEC. 3. Requirements.** – The following shall be the minimum requirements for every
20 evacuation center that will be established under this Act:

21 a. **Location Designation**– Each location for every evacuation center shall be
22 determined by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in close
23 coordination with the LGUs concerned.

24 The location shall be determined based on the following criteria:

25 1. It must be centrally located in the community;

2. It must be of a safe distance from large trees, structures where hazardous materials are used and stored, or high-voltage power lines;
3. It must be near a health facility;
4. It must be located on geotechnically stable land to avoid risk of landslides or exposure to potential landslide of adjacent lands;
5. It must not be located near military base camps, camps of insurgent groups, power plants, factories, and other areas where the occurrence of human-induced disasters are very high.

b. **Structural and Building Capacity**— The evacuation centers shall be constructed and designed to withstand super typhoons or wind speeds of at least three hundred kilometers per hour (300 kph) and seismic activity of at least 8.0 magnitude. The structure must be calamity-resilient, built with sturdy materials, and in accordance with the specifications of Republic Act No. 6541, otherwise known as the "National Building Code of the Philippines" or shall be at par with the standards set by the International Building Code.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall be in charge of the construction of evacuation centers, including the formulation of building specifications and shall ensure that the same are based on standards, issuances, and other guidelines set by the DPWH, and are compliant with the provisions of the National Building Code. The DPWH shall also ensure that the construction of such evacuation centers is in accordance with the abovementioned requirements during its construction phase.

The specifications of the evacuation centers shall be periodically reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the DPWH every three (3) years.

The evacuation center must at least meet the following parameters:

1. The structure must be elevated, in such a manner that is safely above the reach of a high tide storm surge level of at least ten (10) meters;
2. The structure must be a minimum of one (1) meter above the average flood level in the area where the same shall be built; and
3. The structure shall not be less than nine (9) meters in height and shall be designed in accordance with earthquake load standards.

c. **Amenities and Accessibility**. — The evacuation centers shall be well-ventilated and shall have the capacity to accommodate a large number of evacuees. The evacuation center shall have the following minimum amenities:

1. Sleeping quarters for the evacuees;
2. Separate shower and toilet facilities designated for males and females, with one (1) facility for every twenty (20) persons;
3. Amenities to enable access thereto by persons with disabilities;
4. Emergency exit doors;
5. Food preparation areas with adequate ventilation;
6. Trash and waste segregation and collection areas;
7. Health care areas which shall include an isolation or quarantine area for potentially infectious persons;
8. Rainwater harvesting and collection facilities; and
9. Other facilities as may be prescribed by the appropriate authorities.

SEC. 4. Operation and Management. - The LGUs concerned shall be primarily responsible for the operation, supervision, and management of evacuation centers established under this Act. They are also hereby authorized to issue rules and regulations on their proper use and maintenance.

The local *sanggunian* shall promulgate guidelines and procedures for the use and operation of the evacuation center under its jurisdiction. The guidelines shall prescribe rules on the utilization of the evacuation center when it is not used as such: *Provided*, That the evacuation center may only

1 be used for such other activities or purposes that involve the use of collapsible amenities ~~only~~ and
2 those that shall not in any way compromise the serviceability of the evacuation center or impede
3 the use thereof when a disaster occurs: *Provided further*, That the LGU shall impose such penalties
4 as may be deemed proper on the organizers of authorized activities when the evacuation center
5 suffers any damage, defacement, or loss during or as a result of such activities.

6 The mandatory audit of infrastructures used as evacuation centers shall be conducted by
7 the City or Municipality at least once every year and immediately after the occurrence of a hazard
8 or disaster.

9
10 ***SEC. 5. Role of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council***
11 ***(NDRRMC).*** – The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)
12 shall be the lead implementing agency of this Act. It shall give utmost priority to those areas of the
13 country that (a) are identified as disaster prone; (b) are financially incapable to establish their own
14 evacuation centers; and (c) do not have existing evacuation centers of their own.

15 It shall enter into memoranda of agreement (MOA) with the concerned LGUs for the
16 maintenance, operation, and management of a permanent evacuation center in their respective
17 areas of jurisdiction. It shall provide technical assistance and support services to these LGUs in
18 the management of the facility.

19 Local chief executives concerned shall evaluate and provide suitable sites for evacuation
20 centers to determine their geographical stability, and public accessibility in times of disasters. They
21 shall provide for the maintenance, operation, and management of the facility taking into
22 consideration the goal of life preservation and meeting the basic subsistence needs of affected
23 population based on acceptable standards during or immediately after a disaster.

24
25 ***SEC. 6. Coordination Among Agencies.*** – The NDRRMC shall coordinate with the
26 DPWH and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) with regard to the design
27 specifications, cost estimates, and construction details of the evacuation centers that will be
28 constructed pursuant to this Act.

29 Concerned government agencies and instrumentalities, when necessary, shall provide
30 assistance to the NDRRMC to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of this Act.

31
32 ***SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the
33 effectivity of this Act, the NDRRMC shall, in consultation with the DPWH, DOST, League of
34 Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, and other concerned
35 government and private agencies, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the
36 provisions of this Act.

37
38 ***SEC. 8. Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation to fund
39 the construction and maintenance of multi-purpose gyms to serve as evacuation centers shall be
40 charged against the budget provided for this purpose under the DPWH. Thereafter, such amounts
41 necessary for the construction of multipurpose gyms as evacuation centers shall be included in the
42 annual General Appropriations Act. The LGU concerned shall provide the continued
43 maintenance, operation and management of the facility.

44
45 ***SEC. 9. Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or
46 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provisions not otherwise affected shall remain
47 valid and subsisting.

48
49 ***SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order,
50 letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the
51 provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

1
2 **SEC. 11. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
3 the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved