

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
*First Regular Session*



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**House Bill No. 2826**

Introduced by Representative Ralph G. Recto

**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPURPOSE GYM IN ALL  
MUNICIPALITIES AND CITIES TO SERVE AS EVACUATION CENTER DURING  
TIMES OF CALAMITY OR DISASTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR**

**Explanatory Note**

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 severely affected when 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.

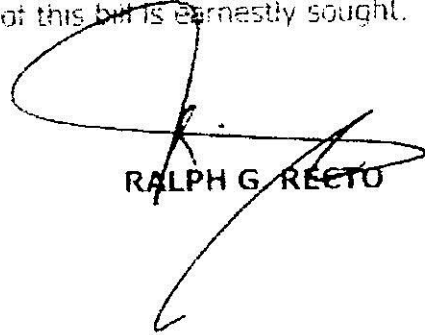
The construction of multipurpose gyms in the country's 1,488 municipalities and 146 cities<sup>1</sup> nationwide will be a permanent recourse for evacuation in times of calamities and natural or man-made disasters. The gym must be able to withstand typhoons, earthquakes and other disasters. It must be designed to have space that can be used flexibly for social activities, sporting events, and as sleeping quarters

<sup>1</sup> As of 29 April 2022. <https://psa.gov.ph/classification/page/>

during the evacuation. The multipurpose gym must be well-ventilated, able to accommodate large groups of people, and must have ample bathing and sanitation facilities. When not in use as a refuge center, the multipurpose gym, which should be in a location where people and emergency rescue personnel can easily access, can be a storehouse for disaster rescue equipment and emergency supplies.

With the reality of stronger typhoons brought about by climate change and the geographical location of the country making it the eighth most disaster-prone country<sup>2</sup>, 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. A better and more permanent facility must be made available to people in times of emergencies.

In the light of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



RALPH G. RECTO

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<sup>2</sup> WorldRiskReport 2021 of The Bundes-Entwicklung Hilft and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IEHV) at Ruhr-University Bochum, <http://weltrisikobericht.de/weltrisikobericht-2021-en/#>

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AN ACT

**PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPURPOSE GYM IN ALL MUNICIPALITIES AND CITIES TO SERVE AS EVACUATION CENTER DURING TIMES OF CALAMITY OR DISASTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1       Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Multipurpose Gym in  
2 all Municipalities and Cities Act”.

3       Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to protect the  
4 people’s right to life and property, and to promote their general welfare. Towards this  
5 end, the State, in cognizance of the vulnerability of the Philippines to calamities and  
6 disasters, shall provide for the construction of a multipurpose gym in every  
7 municipality and city to serve primarily as refuge for displaced families in times of  
8 calamities and disasters.

9       Sec. 3. *Construction of a Multipurpose Gym.* – The Department of Public  
10 Works and Highways (DPWH) shall undertake the construction of a multipurpose gym  
11 in every municipality and city throughout the country which shall serve as a civic center  
12 and as an evacuation center for residents during calamities and disasters: *Provided,*  
13 That any such construction is based on a program prepared by DPWH in coordination  
14 with a representative of the municipality and city concerned. *Provided, further,* That  
15 the municipal or city mayor shall be furnished with the pertinent documents, data and  
16 information before any construction shall commence: *Provided, finally,* That Local

Government Units (LGUs) may include in their respective local infrastructure program the construction of a multipurpose gym.

*Sec. 4. Construction Priority.* – The DPWH shall give construction priority to third to sixth class municipalities, especially those located in disaster-prone areas. The DPWH shall coordinate with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the LGUs concerned to determine which disaster-prone areas to prioritize in the construction of the facility.

Priority shall also be given to municipalities whose residents will volunteer labor services for the construction thereof and for this purpose, the DPWH shall issue the necessary guidelines.

*Sec. 5. Multipurpose Gym Requirements.* – The following shall be the minimum requirements for every Multipurpose Gym that will be established under this Act:

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

The location shall be determined based on the following criteria:

1. It must be centrally located in the community;
2. It must be at 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 a geotechnically stable land to avoid risk of landslides or exposure to potential landslide of adjacent lands; and
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 multipurpose gyms shall be constructed and designed to withstand super typhoons and wind speeds of at least 300 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 DPWH shall be in charge of the construction of multipurpose gyms, 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 multipurpose gyms is in accordance with the abovementioned requirements during its construction phase.

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

The multipurpose gym must at least meet the following parameters:

1. The structure must be elevated, in such a manner that is safely above the reach of 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 multipurpose gym must be well-ventilated and shall have the capacity to accommodate large numbers of evacuees. The multipurpose gyms shall have the following minimum amenities:

1. Floor area devoid of permanent fixtures to be used flexibly for assemblies, sports events, and as sleeping quarters for 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. Isolated area that can be used as a clinic or isolation zone for potentially infectious persons;
8. Rainwater harvesting and collection facilities; and

1                   9. Other facilities as may be prescribed by the appropriate authorities.

2           *Sec. 6. Operation and Management of the Multipurpose Gym.* – The LGUs  
3 concerned shall be primarily responsible for the operation, supervision, and  
4 management of multipurpose gyms established under this Act. They are also hereby  
5 authorized to issue rules and regulations on their proper use and maintenance.

6           The local *sanggunian* shall promulgate guidelines and procedures for the use  
7 and operation of the evacuation center under its jurisdiction. The guidelines shall  
8 prescribe rules on the utilization of the evacuation center when it is not used as such:  
9 *Provided*, That the evacuation center may only be used for such other activities or  
10 purposes that involve the use of collapsible amenities and those that shall not in any  
11 way compromise the serviceability of the evacuation center or impede the use thereof  
12 when a disaster occurs: *Provided further*, That the LGU shall impose such penalties as  
13 may be deemed proper on the organizers of authorized activities when the  
14 multipurpose gyms suffer any damage, defacement, or loss during or as a result of  
15 such activities.

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

19           *Sec. 7. Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the immediate  
20 implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current  
21 appropriations of the DPWH. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary to carry out  
22 the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

23           The LGUs are authorized to utilize local funds as may be provided in their  
24 respective appropriation ordinances for the implementation of this Act.

25           *Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from the  
26 effectivity of this Act, the DPWH shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the  
27 effective implementation of the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and  
28 regulations issued pursuant to this Act shall take effect thirty (30) days after its  
29 publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

1       Sec. 9. *Separability Clause* – In the event that any provision of this Act is  
2 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be  
3 affected by such declaration.

4       Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or  
5 portions thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified  
6 accordingly.

7       Sec. 11. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its  
8 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official*  
9 *Gazette*.

Approved,