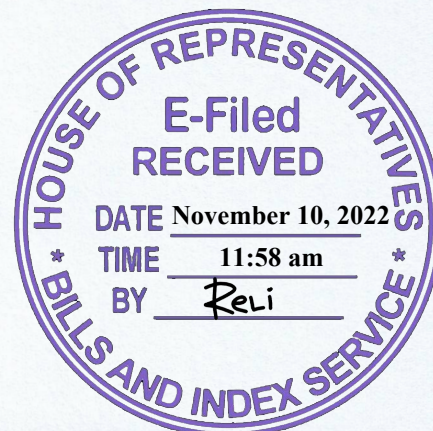


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6019



Introduced by Representative Rex Gatchalian

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING EVACUATION CENTERS IN EVERY MUNICIPALITY AND CITY,
PROVIDING FOR THE NECESSARY FACILITIES, ENSURING THEIR
STRUCTURAL CAPACITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The geography of the Philippines makes it vulnerable to numerous natural disasters, especially earthquakes, tropical cyclones, and flooding. According to data from Statista Research Department, in 2021, the earthquakes in the Philippines had a 10 risk index points while tropical cyclones had a 9.5 risk index points.¹ During the occurrence of these natural disasters, affected Filipinos are displaced and are often in need to be relocated.

Schools have been commonly used as evacuation centers in times of calamities, which disrupts school activities. The Department of Education (DepEd) reported that 869 public schools were used as evacuation centers in 2020. The classrooms and other facilities therein served as temporary housing to some 21,000 families or 82,584 individuals.² This has been such a usual practice that DepEd issued a Manual for School-Based Disaster Preparedness and Response Measures for Tropical Typhoons, Flooding, and Other Weather-Related Disturbances and Calamities through Department Order No. 33 on 20 August 2021. Conceivably, since

¹ Statista Research Department, Risk index of natural disasters in the Philippines in 2021, by type available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/921036/philippines-risk-index-for-natural-disasters/#:~:text=Due%20to%20the%20geographical%20context,a%209.5%20risk%20index%20points.>

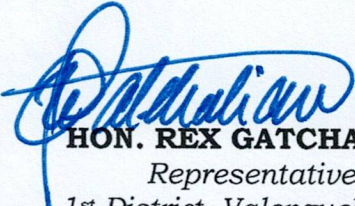
² Krissy Aguilar, 226 schools damaged, over 800 used as evacuation centers after Rolly's onslaught, Inquirer (3 November 2020), available at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1355855/deped-226-schools-damaged-over-800-schools-used-as-evacuation-centers-after-rollys-onslaught#ixzz7jwKwR000>

schools are not calamity-proof, classrooms are often damaged after the evacuation efforts if not totally destroyed.³

Thus, this measure seeks to establish a dedicated evacuation center in every municipality and city in the country, providing for necessary facilities and structural capacity. It should be noted that in recognition of the current lack of evacuation centers in the Philippines, schools will still be used as evacuation centers. However, the bill provides that when a local government unit (LGU) is included in the priority list of LGUs which need an evacuation center and there is no available site where the government could construct a new evacuation center, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council may instead consider the improvement of facilities in schools or other structures already being used as evacuation centers by the LGU to make it compliant to the minimum requirements on location and structural capacity.

It also emphasizes the need to ensure the structural capacity of existing evacuation centers and those that will be constructed in the future. It is imperative that strict compliance with the National Building Code of the Philippines is observed, and that inputs of structural engineers are integrated into the design and specifications of evacuation centers to ensure that it can withstand the ever-changing climatic and other hazards. Also, in recognition of the budgetary requirements of this endeavor, the measure mandates the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council to determine prioritized areas, taking into account the most vulnerable communities with less stable infrastructure.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


HON. REX GATCHALIAN
Representative
1st District, Valenzuela City

³ Ime Sornito, WV'S 166 PUBLIC SCHOOLS DAMAGED; P1.1-B rehab fund needed – DepEd-6 exec, Panay News (30 December 2021), available at <https://www.panaynews.net/wvs-166-public-schools-damaged-p1-1-b-rehab-fund-needed-deped-6-exec/>

1 evacuated or displaced from their homes due to disasters, calamities or other
2 emergency events, such as typhoons, floods, storm surges, drought and other severe
3 climate disturbances, as well as fire, and the outbreak of illnesses and diseases that
4 presents imminent danger to life and property.

5
6 **SEC. 4. Facility Requirements.** - The following shall be the minimum
7 requirements for every evacuation center that will be established under this Act:

8 a) *Location* - The evacuation center should not be at risk of isolation. It should
9 be located at a safe distance from danger areas or hazards. The Local Disaster Risk
10 Reduction and Management Council (LDRPMC) of the local government unit (LGU)
11 concerned shall coordinate with the Department of Environment and Natural
12 Resources (DENR) to utilize the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's (MGB) geohazard
13 maps in determining the appropriate location of the evacuation center.

14 The following shall be considered in identifying an ideal site for an evacuation
15 center:

- 16 1) Drainage;
- 17 2) Elevation;
- 18 3) Protection from strong winds;
- 19 4) Accessibility to and proximity from the vulnerable
20 community;
- 21 5) Availability of the following in the immediate vicinity:
 - 22 i) Parking areas for emergency and other vehicles;
 - 23 ii) Allocated area for additional portable toilets;
 - 24 iii) Storage tanks for potable and non-potable water; and
 - 25 iv) Safe shelter for livestock.

26 b) *Structural Capacity* - New evacuation centers and improvements in schools
27 used as an evacuation center which will be constructed after the effectivity of this
28 Act must be made of construction materials which are in accordance with the
29 specifications of Republic Act No. 6541, otherwise known as the "*National Building*
30 *Code of the Philippines*," and be able to withstand wind speeds of three hundred
31 twenty (320) kilometers per hour or two hundred (200) miles per hour and moderate
32 seismic activity of at least 7.2 magnitude.

33 The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall be responsible
34 in formulating the appropriate specifications for evacuation centers and to ensure
35 compliance with these specifications during the construction of evacuation centers.
36 The specifications shall be periodically reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the

1 DPWH every three years.

2 c) *Suitability and Capacity of Premises* - If the building is not primarily built
3 as a shelter or permanent site for use as an evacuation center, considerations
4 should be made on its impact to normal business if its operation as an evacuation
5 center is prolonged or its normal function is taken off for an extended period of time.

6 The number and diversity of evacuees as well as public health and safety
7 concerns should be considered in the suitability of the premises.

8 It must likewise be able to provide electricity, back-up power supply, water,
9 sewerage system, solid waste management, and physical mobility for people with
10 mobility aids.

11 d) *Physical Amenities* - The evacuation and relief center should
12 be able to provide the following minimum facilities:

- 13 1. Sleeping area;
- 14 2. Eating area;
- 15 3. Shower and toilet facilities which should accommodate
16 twenty (20) people per shower or toilet room, and should be utilized
17 according to gender;
- 18 4. Kitchen or food preparation area;
- 19 5. Trash collection area;
- 20 6. Clinic area including an isolation area for potentially infectious
21 people;
- 22 7. Laundry area;
- 23 8. Recreation area; and
- 24 9. Pet and livestock holding area.

25 e) *Food Safety* - Kitchen and dining facilities should be able to cater for the
26 number of people in the evacuation center. Food preparation and storage facilities
27 should comply with satisfactory standards of the Department of Health on
28 cleanliness to minimize the potential for contamination and invasion of insects and
29 pests.

30
31 **SEC. 5.** *Priority in the Establishment of Evacuation Centers.* -
32 The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) shall, in
33 coordination with local chief executives of provinces, cities, and municipalities,
34 identify areas to be given the highest priority in the establishment of new evacuation
35 centers.

36 Upon determination by the NDRRMC and the chief executives of LGUs, the

1 NDRRMC shall make a priority list of LGUs needing evacuation centers. The
2 frequency of occurrence of calamities, whether natural or human-induced, and the
3 number of displaced persons in the LGU during said calamities in the past three
4 years may be considered in coming up with the priority list.

5
6 **SEC. 6. *Improvement of Schools or Structures Used as Evacuation Centers.*** -

7 When an LGU is included in the priority list of LGUs which need an evacuation
8 center pursuant to Section 5 of this Act and there is no available site where the
9 government can construct a new evacuation center, the NDRRMC may instead
10 consider the improvement of facilities in schools or other structures already being
11 used as evacuation center by the LGU to make it comply with the provisions of
12 Section 4 of this Act, particularly on the requirement on location and structural
13 capacity.

14
15 **SEC. 7. *Role of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.***

16 - The NDRRMC shall be the lead agency in implementing this Act. It shall ensure
17 that the requirements of this Act are faithfully complied with.

18
19 **SEC. 8. *Coordination Among Agencies.*** - The NDRRMC shall coordinate with

20 the DPWH and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) with regard to
21 the design specifications, cost estimates and construction details of new evacuation
22 centers that will be constructed pursuant to this Act.

23 All government agencies and instrumentalities, when necessary, shall provide
24 assistance to the NDRRMC to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of
25 this Act.

26
27 **SEC. 9. *Operation and Maintenance of Evacuation Centers.*** - The operation

28 and management of evacuation centers shall be under the auspices of the LGU
29 where the evacuation center is situated while the DPWH shall be tasked with the
30 maintenance of evacuation centers that will be constructed under this Act.

31 The local Sanggunian shall promulgate guidelines and procedures for the use
32 and operation of the evacuation centers under their jurisdiction. The guidelines shall
33 include provisions on the use of the evacuation center when it is not being utilized
34 as an evacuation center including its utilization as a classroom, livelihood center,
35 youth center,
36 or multi-purpose center to benefit the constituents of the LGU.

1 The Department of Education (DepEd) shall be in-charge with the
2 maintenance, repair and upgrading of the additional facilities of schools which will
3 be constructed in accordance with Section 6 of this Act.
4

5 **SEC. 10. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the implementation of
6 this Act shall be charged to the appropriations of the DPWH with respect to the
7 construction and maintenance of new evacuation centers. For this purpose, the
8 DPWH shall include in its programs and annual budget the maintenance of
9 evacuation centers constructed under this Act.

10 The amount necessary for the operation of the evacuation centers shall be
11 charged to the funds of the LDRRMC.

12 The construction and maintenance of additional facilities for schools already
13 used as evacuation centers shall be charged to the appropriations for the DepEd.
14 Thereafter, such amount needed by the concerned Department for the continued
15 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
16 Act.
17

18 **SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The Chairperson of the
19 NDRRMC, in close coordination with Administrator of the Office of Civil Defense
20 (OCD)/ NDRRMC Executive Director, and the member-Secretaries of the NDRRMC,
21 shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of
22 this Act.
23

24 **SEC. 12. Separability Clause.** - If any provision or part of this Act is declared
25 invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall
26 remain in full force and effect.
27

28 **SEC. 13. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations,
29 and other issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or
30 modified accordingly.
31

32 **SEC. 14. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
33 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation in the
34 Philippines.

Approved,