

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1789



Introduced by **HON. MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE, HON. VINCENZO RENATO LUIGI R. VILLAFUERTE, HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY G. HORIBATA, AND HON. TERRY L. RIDON**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The fisherfolk sector remain to be one of the most vulnerable and poorest sectors in the Philippines. It is the mandate of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to support the fisherfolk and provide livelihood programs for their progress. Our fisherfolk plays a crucial part in adding to our daily food supply as they make it their life's mission to catch fish and sell them. However, just like any other sectors, they likewise face challenges such as climate change, overfishing, illegal fishing, limited access to markets, and competition with commercial fishing, which makes their livelihood more difficult.

Being part of the fisherfolk sector is far from easy as they have made their livelihood the core of how they live each day. In order to ensure constant access to fish, they need to live in coastal barangays to gain direct access to fishing grounds. According to Fish Forever Philippines, the country is the 5th largest coastline in the world which is made up of 22,584 miles of coast. Furthermore, 80% of Filipinos live in the coastal municipalities while 85% of the Filipino fishers are registered as small-scale fishermen. Fifty percent of our daily fish are caught by these small-scale fishermen.¹

Agonizingly, many of our fisherfolk are always displaced due to natural disasters such as storms, typhoons, and sea-level rise because they live near bodies of water. Therefore, in order to support and empower our fisherfolk sector, this bill mandates the Department of Agriculture, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, and the Local Government Units to establish fisherfolk resettlement areas within their jurisdictions that shall be considered as their housing site still with access to fishing grounds.

This is a re-filed bill from the 19th Congress, and was approved on Third and Final Reading and was transmitted to Senate. Thus, in light of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


HON. MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

¹ Rare. (n.d.). *Fish Forever in the Philippines*. <https://rare.org/program/philippines/>



HON. VINCENZO RENATO LUIGI R. VILLAFUERTE



HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY G. HORIBATA



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**AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FISHERFOLK RESETTLEMENT
AREAS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE SEC. 108 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE "PHILIPPINE FISHERIES CODE OF 1998," AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10654"**

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

SECTION 1. Section 108 of Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as "The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998", as amended by Republic Act No. 10654, is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 108. *Fisherfolk Settlement Areas.* - [The Department shall establish and create fisherfolk settlement areas in coordination with concerned agencies of the government, where certain areas of the 6 public domain, specifically near the fishing grounds, shall be reserved for the settlement of the municipal fisherfolk. Nothing in this section shall be construed to vest ownership of any resettlement area to a municipal fisherfolk for whom said areas may have been reserved for or had been actually granted to.] **THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF CITIES OR MUNICIPALITIES EXERCISING JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL AREAS AND MUNICIPAL WATERS, SHALL IDENTIFY, ESTABLISH, AND CREATE SETTLEMENT AREAS WHICH HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO FISHING GROUNDS: PROVIDED, THAT IN PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED OR ESTABLISHED SETTLEMENT AREAS WITH ADEQUATE ACCESS TO FISHING GROUNDS, FISHERFOLK SHALL BE GRANTED PREFERENCE IN THE AWARD OF SETTLEMENT RIGHTS THEREAT: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SETTLEMENT AREAS SHALL BE IN FAVOR OF FISHERFOLK WHO ARE REGISTERED AS SUCH WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE CITY OR MUNICIPALITY AND WHO ARE WITHOUT REAL PROPERTY: PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS EXERCISING JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL AREAS AND MUNICIPAL WATERS ARE HEREBY MANDATED TO INTEGRATE SETTLEMENT AREAS FOR FISHERFOLK IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANS".**

SECTION 2. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other portions or provisions hereof, which are not affected thereby, shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, orders, circulars, issuances, rules and regulations and parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 4. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,