

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2932



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE AUDREY KAY T. ZUBIRI**

AN ACT
ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERISM DURING EMERGENCIES BY
PROTECTING VOLUNTEERS FROM LIABILITY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Filipino people take immense pride in their distinctive traits, such as "*Bayanihan*," which embodies the spirit of selflessness and prioritizing the welfare of others above one's own. This cultural value is deeply ingrained in Filipino society, and is evident in the way Filipinos consistently lend a helping hand during times of need.

Given the Philippines' geographical susceptibility to frequent catastrophes and natural disasters, a profound sense of volunteerism has emerged among Filipinos. Time and again, individuals step forward to help in charity work, relief operations, and even high-risk rescue efforts. These volunteers exert courageous and selfless acts without expecting anything in return¹, driven solely by a desire to help their fellow countrymen.

However, while society recognizes and appreciates the heroic actions of these volunteers, their health and safety often remain at risk. In the absence of legal and medical protection, the lives of those who dedicate themselves to saving others remain vulnerable.

For instance, in 2019, a news report highlighted the tragic deaths of a soldier and four volunteers who were part of the search and rescue teams during Typhoon Ondoy². These tragic

¹<https://www.philstar.com/inbox-world/2009/10/18/514984/what-can-you-say-about-bayanihan-spirit-filipino>

² [Over 100 killed and almost 340,000 affected by 'Ondoy' | GMA News Online](#)

incidents underscore the dangers that volunteers face, especially when they are not adequately protected.

While Republic Act No. 9418 or the “Volunteer Act of 2007”³ provides some level of protection to volunteers, the existing law still falls short in ensuring comprehensive protection for volunteers, particularly in terms of liability protection, medical support, mandatory insurance coverage for disability, death or medical benefits and adequate funding to meet the increasing demand for volunteer services.

With this proposed measure, we seek to strengthen the protection afforded to our brave and selfless volunteers. This will ensure that volunteers can serve with confidence, knowing they are protected from unjust legal actions and are covered by insurance in the event of injury or casualty while on duty.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is urgently sought.


AUDREY KAY T. ZUBIRI
Representative, 3rd District of Bukidnon

³ An Act Institutionalizing A Strategy For Rural Development, Strengthening Volunteerism And For Other Purposes

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Emergency Volunteer*
2 *Protection Act of 2025.*"

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It shall be the policy of the State to provide a
4 conductive and enabling legal environment for volunteers by placing mechanisms that will
5 protect their rights and award them with privileges for their contribution to society.
6

7 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** - As used in this Act:
8

9 a. "**Volunteer**" refers to an individual or group who provides reasonable assistance
10 and contributes time, service and resources in an emergency situation and who does not receive
11 any compensation other than reasonable reimbursement or allowance for expenses actually and
12 directly incurred for rendering volunteer service.
13

14 The volunteers shall be duly licensed, certified or authorized by appropriate
15 government entities or non-government organizations, or accredited by and registered with the
16 Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) prior to deployment;
17

18 b. "**Emergency**" requiring immediate attention and remedial action involving
19 unforeseen occurrence sudden, and impending threat or dangers to life, health or safety of a
20 person;
21

22 c. "**Volunteer sectors**" refer to those sectors that organize themselves into volunteers
23 to take advocacy and action primarily for local and national development as well as
24 international cooperation and understanding; and
25

1 d. "*Spontaneous volunteer*" refers to an individual who may either be trained
2 volunteers from accredited training institutions, or an untrained person who performs voluntary
3 work as necessitated by an emergency situation.

4
5 **SEC. 4. *Liability Protection for Volunteers.*** - No volunteer shall be liable for harm
6 caused by an act or omission done in performance of his or her duties or functions as volunteers
7 if:

- 8
9 a. The volunteer was acting in an emergency situation;
10 b. The volunteer was properly licensed, certified or authorized by the appropriate
11 government authorities, either government entities or non-government
12 organizations, or accredited by and registered with the PNVSCA prior to
13 deployment;
14 c. The volunteer acted within the scope of his/her responsibilities in the government
15 entity, non-profit organization, or the PNVSCA;
16 d. The volunteer acted under orders or direction of appropriate government authority;
17 e. The volunteer acted in an emergency situation, where there are no government
18 authority or trained volunteers present, in order to assist or care for persons who
19 are:
20 i. In serious or imminent danger, or apparently in serious and imminent danger,
21 of being injured or further injured;
22 ii. Injured or apparently injured; or
23 iii. Suffering, or apparently suffering, from an illness.

24
25 **SEC. 5. *Exceptions.*** - The liability protection for volunteers under this Act shall not
26 apply to the following:

- 27
28 a. Where the act constitutes a crime;
29 b. Where the volunteer caused damage or harm by willful or criminal misconduct, gross
30 negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or
31 safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer; or
32 c. Where the acts were performed under the influence of intoxicating alcohol or any
33 dangerous drug at the time of the misconduct.

34
35 **SEC. 6. *Mandatory Insurance.*** - The PNVSCA shall provide an additional insurance
36 coverage to all volunteers as defined in this Act which shall give the following minimum
37 benefits:

- 38
39 a. Disability Benefits of Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (P350,000.00) for
40 volunteers who shall suffer total or partial disability, whether permanent or temporary,
41 as a result of an injury sustained during performance of duty;
42 b. Death benefits amounting to Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (P300,000.00) for
43 volunteers who shall perish in the line of duty; and

1 c. Reimbursement of actual medical costs up to Two Hundred Thousand Pesos
2 (P200,000.00) for volunteers who shall be hospitalized or who shall require medical
3 attendance for injuries sustained while in the performance of duty.
4

5 **SEC. 7. *Trainings.*** - The PNVSCA shall conduct mandatory trainings of all their
6 registered and potential volunteers.
7

8 **SEC. 8. *Accreditation of Volunteers.*** - Unless properly licensed, certified or authorized
9 by the appropriate government authorities, other government entities or non-government
10 organizations, volunteers must be accredited by and registered with the PNVSCA prior to
11 deployment to be exempted from liability.
12

13 **SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The PNVSCA, in consultation with
14 relevant government entities and non-profit organizations, shall promulgate rules and
15 regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.
16

17 **SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act shall be declared
18 unconstitutional, any other provision not affected thereby shall remain in full effect.
19

20 **SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.*** -All laws, degrees, orders, rules and regulations or other
21 issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
22 amended accordingly.
23

24 **SEC. 12. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
25 in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,