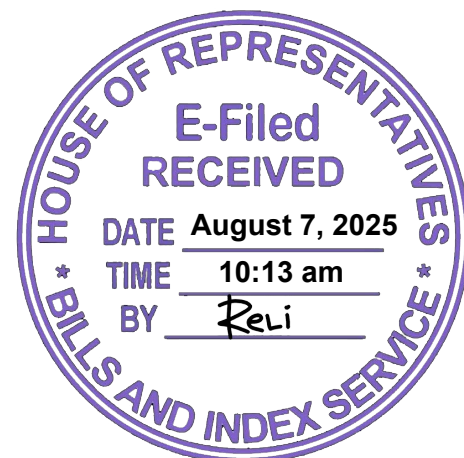


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3353**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AN ON-SITE, IN-CITY OR NEAR-CITY RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MANDATING THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS PROVIDE LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE AND OTHER BASIC SERVICES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992”

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Informal settlements are common features of the urban landscape in the Philippines that are often portrayed as pictures of poverty and desolation. In the National Capital Region alone, nearly 13 million residents reportedly live in settlements¹ of another without the title or the owner’s consent².

The longstanding plight of informal settlers for decent living conditions is a result of meager access to scarce resources of the socioeconomically disadvantaged sectors, and as such, should be addressed by the State.

The responsibility of the State to implement a land and housing reform program and the rights of urban and rural poor tenants are enshrined in Article XIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution:

“Section 9. The State shall, by law, and for the common good, undertake, in cooperation with the private sector, a continuing program of urban land reform and housing which will make

¹ The Rockefeller’s Foundation, 2002. Accessed on October 20, 2022
<https://nextcity.org/informalcity/city/manila>

² Philippine Statistics Authority, 2018 <https://psa.gov.ph/content/squatter-or-informal-dwellers-1> Accessed online on October 20, 2022

available at affordable cost decent centers and resettlement areas. It shall also promote adequate employments of such programs that the Senate shall respect the rights of small property owners.”

“Section 10. Urban and rural poor dwellers shall not be evicted nor their dwellings demolished, except in accordance with law and in a just and humane manner.”

No resettlement of urban or rural dwellers shall be undertaken without adequate consultation with them and the communities where they are to be located.”

Thus, the enactment of Republic Act No. 7279 or the “Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.” However, as evident today, the law fell short in addressing the dilemma of the homeless poor.

Families in resettlement areas outside Metro Manila lament about hunger and poverty due to lack of livelihood opportunities, expensive electricity and water charges, and added commute costs as establishments like schools and markets are too far from the resettlement area. As a result, some families resort to selling their home units and moving back to informal settlements in the Metro.

This bill seeks to uphold the rights of informal settler families (ISFs) through the establishment of an on-site, in-city or near-city resettlement program. The proposed legislation also provides for the participation of ISFs through the formulation of a People’s Plan which shall be the policy of the basis of their resettlement. This will ensure that the ISFs were properly consulted and that their concerns regarding employment, livelihood, and access to basic services are addressed.

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


REP. PM VARGAS
Fifth District, Quezon City

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3353

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AN ON-SITE, IN-CITY OR NEAR-CITY RESETTLEMENT
PROGRAM FOR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES AND, IN CONNECTION
THEREWITH, MANDATING THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS
PROVIDE LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE AND OTHER BASIC SERVICES,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AS
AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992”

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*On-Site, In-City or Near City Resettlement Act.*”

SECTION 2. Amendatory Provisions. – For purposes of this Act, the following provisions of Republic Act No. 7279, otherwise known as the “Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992,” are hereby amended as follows:

- a. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7279 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act:

“x x x

“(w) x x x; [and]

“ ‘Zonal improvement Program or ZIP’ refers to the program of the National Housing Authority of upgrading and improving blighted squatters areas within the cities and municipalities of Metro Manila pursuant to existing statues and pertinent executive issuances [.];

“ (Y) ‘ADEQUATE AND GENUINE CONSULTATION’ REFERS TO THE STANDARD OF CONSULTATION WITH THE AFFECTED

INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES (ISFs) WHICH SHALL REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING:

“ (1) EFFECTIVE DISSEMINATION OF RELEVANT INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS INCLUDING LAND RECORDS, HOUSING BUDGETS, THE PROPOSED PLAN OR PROJECT, ALTERNATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS, AND COMPREHENSIVE RESETTLEMENT PLANS;

“ (2) REASONABLE TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO REVIEW, COMMENT AND OBJECT TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT;

“ (3) PROVISION BY THE GOVERNMENT OR NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS OF LEGAL, TECHNICAL, AND OTHER ADVICE TO AFFECTED PERSONS ON THEIR RIGHTS AND OPTIONS;

“ (4) PUBLIC HEARING THAT’S PROVIDE AFFECTED ISFs AND THEIR ADVOCATED WITH OPPROTUNITIES TO CHALLENGE THE EVICITION DECISION OR PRESENT ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS AND TO ARTICULATE THEIR DEMANDS AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES; AND

“ (5) IN CASE NO AGREEMENT IS REACHED ON THE PROPOSALS OF THE CONCERED PARTIES, AND INDEPENDENT BODY HAVING CONSITUTIONAL AUTHORITY, SUCH AS A COURT OF LAW, SHOULD MEDIATE, ARBITRATE OR ADJUDICATE AS MAY BE APPROPORATE;

“ (Z) ‘ CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS OR CSOS’ REFER TO NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs), PEOPLE’S ORGANIZATIONS (POs), COOPERATIVES, TRADE UNIONS, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, MEDIA GROUPS, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MOVEMENTS, FOUNDATIONS AND OTHER CITIZEN’S GROUPS FORMED PRIMARILY FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND MONITOR GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS, ENGAGE IN POLICY DISCUSSIONS, AND ACTIVELY PARTICIATE IN COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES WITH THE GOVERNMENT;

“ (AA) ‘IN- CITY RESETTLEMENT’ REFERS TO A RELOCATION SITE WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF A CITY WHERE THE AFFECTED ISFs ARE LIVING;

“ (BB) ‘ INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS’ REFER TO:

“ (1) RESIDENTIAL AREAS WHERE HOUSING UNITS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED BY SETTLERS ON LAND WHICH THEY OCCUPY ILLEGALLY; OR

“ (2) UNPLANNED SETTLEMENTS AND AREAS WHERE HOUSING IS NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING PLANNING AND BUILDING REGULATIONS;

“ (CC) ‘INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES’ COLLECTIVELY REFERRED TO AS ISFs, REFERS TO FAMILIES LIVING IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AS THE LATTER IS DEFINED IN THIS ACT;

“ (DD) ‘ NEAR- CITY SETTLEMENT’ REFERS TO REALLOCATION SITE IN THE CITY OTHER THAN THE CITY OF THE AFFECTED INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE RELOCATION SITE IS ADJACENT TO THE CITY WHERE THE AFFECTED ISFs HAVE THEIR SETTLEMENTS;

“ (EE) ‘NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION OR NGO’ REFERS TO A DULY REGISTERED NONSTOCK, NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION FOCUSING ON THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE BASIC OR DISADVANTAGED SECTORS OF SOCIETY BY PROVIDING ADVOCACY, TRAINING, COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, RESEARCH, ACCESS TO RESOURCES, AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTIVITIES, AS DEFINED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8425, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘SOCIAL REFORM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION ACT’ AND ORGANIZED AND OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SCIENTIFIC, RESEARCH, EDUCATIONAL, CHARACTER-BUILDING AND YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, SOCIAL WELFARE, CULTURAL AND CHARITABLE PURPOSES, OR A COMBINATION THEREOF, AND NO PART OF THE NET INCOME OF WHICH INSURES TO THE BENEFIT OF ANY PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL PURSUANT TO SECTION 34 (H) (2) (c) (1) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘TAX REFORM ACT OF 1997’;

“ (FF) ‘OFF-CITY RESETTLEMENT’ REFERS TO A RELOCATION SITE DEVELOPED OUTSIDE AND NOT ADJACENT TO THE CITY WHERE THE AFFECTED ISFs HAVE THEIR SETTLEMENTS;

“ (GG) ‘PEOPLE’S PLAN’ REFERS TO THE PLAN FORMULATED BY THE BENEFICIARY- ASSOCIATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON THE URBAN POOR WITH OR WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF CSOs, WHICH SHALL CONTAIN THE SITE DEVELOPMENT, AND CAPABILITY BUILDING; AND

“ (HH) ‘SOCIAL PREPARATION’ REFERS TO THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING SOCIAL, ORGANIZATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL NORMS AND MECHANISMS, SUCH NORMS AND MECHANISMS WILL; (1) ENABLE THE SETTLERS TO COPE WITH CHANGES AND (2) IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CONCERNED INSTITUTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS, ENCOURAGE THE SETTLERS NOT ONLY

TO WORK AMONG THEMSELVES FOR THE PURPOSE OF DRAWING UP AND UNDERTAKING THEIR HOUSING RESETTLEMENT PROPOSALS BUT ALSO TO ACTIVELY AND MEANINGFULLY PARTICIPATE IN HOUSING RESETTLEMENT PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN THEIR BEHALF, THUS RESOLVING COLLECTIVE ACTION PROBLEMS AMONG COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND COORDINATION PROBLEMS WITH GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ENTITES.”;

(b) Section 23 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

“ SEC. 23. Participation of **PROGRAM** Beneficiaries **OR AFFECTED ISFs, FORMATION OF BENEFICIARY ASSOCIATION AND FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PEOPLE’S PLAN.** – The local government units, in coordination with the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor and concerned government agencies, shall afford Program beneficiaries **OR AFFECTED ISFs** or their duly designated representatives an opportunity to be heard and to participate in the decision-making process over matters involving the protection and promotion of their legitimate collective interests which shall include appropriate documentation and feedback mechanisms. They shall also be encouraged to organize themselves [and undertake self-help cooperative housing and livelihood activities] **INTO AN ASSOCIATION FOR ACCREDITATION AS BENEFICIARIES OR AWARDEES OF OWNERSHIP RIGHTS UNDER THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM, COMMUNITY MORTGAGE PROGRAM, LAND TENURE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AND OTHER SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN RELATION TO A SOCIALIZED HOUSING PROJECT ACTUALLY BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OR BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS.** They shall assist the government in preventing the incursions of professional squatters and members of squatting syndicates into their communities.

“ In Instances, when the affected beneficiaries have failed to organize themselves or form an [alliance] **ASSOCIATION** within a reasonable period prior to the implementation of the program or projects affecting them, consultation between the implementing agency and the affected beneficiaries shall be conducted with the assistance of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor and the concerned nongovernmental organization **UNTIL AN ASSOCIATION IS FORMED IN PLACE.**

“THE ASSOCIATION, IN COORDINATION WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION FOR THE URBAN POOR WITH OR WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF CSOs SHALL FORMULATE A ‘PEOPLE’S PLAN’ THROUGH A PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WHICH

SHALL CONTAIN A SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, INCLUDING NONPHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS SUCH AS SELF-HELP DEVELOPMENT, AND CAPABILITY-BUILDING TRAININGS.

“THE ASSOCIATION, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF CSOs AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INCLUDING THE NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY COMMISSION (NAPC), PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION FOR THE URBAN POOR, NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY, CITY OR MUNICIPAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, SOCIAL HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES OF GOVERNMENT, SHALL AGREE ON, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT THE PEOPLE’S PLAN.

“ IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROTECTION GUIDELINES PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 28 OF THIS ACT, A RELOCATION ACTION PLAN SHALL BE AN INDISPENSIBLE COMPONENT OF THE PEOPLE’S PLAN. THE RELOCATION ACTION PLAN SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

“(A) ENSURE SAFE, AFFORDABLE, DECENT, AND HUMANE CONDITION OF RELOCATION, INCORPORATING THEREIN APPROPRIATE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPATAION STANDARDS;

“(B) PROVIDE ADEQUATE SOCIAL PREPARATION; AND

“(C) PREVENT FORCED EVICTION:

PROVIDED, THAT PRIMARY CONSIDERATION SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE HOUSING FINANCIAL SCHEME SUGGESTED IN THE PEOPLE’S PLAN.”;

(c) Section 26 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 26. Urban Renewal and Resettlement. – [This] URBAN RENEWAL AND RESETTLEMENT shall include the rehabilitation and development of blighted and slum areas and the resettlement of Program beneficiaries in accordance with the provisions of this Act. On-Site development shall be implemented [whenever possible] AFTER ADEQUATE AND GENUINE CONSULTATION WITH THE AFFECTED ISFs, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PEOPLE’S PLAN FORUMLATED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23 OF THIS ACT, in order to ensure minimum movement of occupants of blighted lands and slum areas.

“[The] WHERE DEMOLITION FOR EVICTION IS ALLOWED IN THE AREA OCCUPIED BY THE PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES PURUSANT TO SECTION 28 OF THIS ACT, AND ON-SITE

RESETTLEMENT CANNOT BE UNDERTAKEN BY REASON THEREOF, THE IN-CITY resettlement of the beneficiaries of the Program from their existing places of occupancy shall be undertaken only [when on-site development is not feasible and] after compliance with the procedures laid down in [Section 28 of this Act] **”THE SAME SECTION OF THIS ACT AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PREFERENCE OF THE AFFECTED ISFs AS CONTAINED IN THE PEOPLE’S PLAN.**

“SHOULD IN-CITY RESETTLEMENT NOT BE FEASIBLE, NEAR-CITY RESETTLEMENT SHALL BE CONSIDERED. OFF-CITY RESETTLEMENT SHALL ONLY BE RESORTED TO WHEN DIRECTLY REQUESTED BY THE AFFECTED ISFs THEMSELVES, AND MUST SATISFY THE REQUIRMENTS OF ADEQUATE AND GENUINE CONSULTATION PRIOR TO RELOCATION.” And

(d) Section 29 of the Same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC.29. Resettlement- Within two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act, the local government units, in coordination with the National Housing Authority, shall implement the relocation and resettlement of persons living in danger area such as esteros, railroad tracks, garbage dump, riverbanks, shorelines, waterways, and in public places such as sidewalks, roads, parks and playgrounds. The local government unit, in coordination with the National Housing Authority, shall provide relocation or resettlement sites with basic services to meet the basic needs of the affected families.

“IN INSTANCES WHEN THE RELOCATION OR RESETTLEMENT SITE IS LOCATED IN ANOTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT THAT IMPLEMENTS THE RELOCATION OR RESETTLEMENT AND THE CONCERNED NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES SHALL, THROUGH A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT, PROVIDE THE OTHER BASIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ENUMERATED UNDER SECTION 21 OF THIS ACT TO THE RECEPIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT WHERE THE RELOCATION OR RESETTLEMENT SITE IS LOCATED.

“THE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE- BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SHALL FORMULATE THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS ON THE COST-SHARING MECHANISM NECESSARY TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE PROVISION OF SUCH OTHER BASIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

“IN ADDITION TO THE FUNDING SOURCES PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 42 OF THIS ACT, THE ALLOCATION FOR THE

BASIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES MAY BE TAKEN BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT IMPLEMENTING THE RELOCATION OR RESETTLEMENT FROM THE TWENTY (20%) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE ALLOTMENT APPROPRIATED FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AS MANDATED UNDER SECTION 287 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991'."

SECTION 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development and the Department of the Interior and Local Government, in consultation and coordination with appropriate government agencies, CSOs, NGOs, representatives from the private sector, and ISFs, shall promulgate a new set of implementing rules and regulations (IRR) within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act. The IRR shall be consistent with the provisions of this Act, particularly with the amendments, parameters, and standards introduced to Section 23, 26, and 29 of the “Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992,” and shall include the following:

- (a) A people’s Plan template to guide ISFs in the development of their own People’s Plan: Provided, that such template shall be a complete pro forma People’s Plan: Provided, however, that such a template shall be used to benchmark minimum standards in a People’s Plan; and
- (b) A guide to effective implementation of the People’s Plan, including details on the necessity of the issuance of internal memoranda by concerned agencies.

SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part, section, or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,