



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8436

Introduced by Representative Nelson S. Legacion
Third Congressional District, Camarines Sur

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is uniquely positioned at the intersection of the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Northwestern Pacific Typhoon Belt. This geographic reality subjects the archipelago to a "perfect storm" of hazards: we endure an average of twenty tropical cyclones annually and constant seismic activity from over twenty active volcanoes and multiple major fault lines. According to the World Risk Index, the Philippines consistently ranks as the most disaster-prone nation globally.

Recent catastrophes, including the massive flooding from Typhoon Kristine (2024) and the unprecedented surge of Super Typhoon Uwan (2025), have exposed a critical gap in our national disaster framework: the lack of integrated evacuation plans for animals.

The strategic necessity of animal inclusion disaster preparedness is fundamentally a human safety issue. Evidence shows that residents frequently ignore mandatory evacuation orders because they refuse to abandon their pets and animals who are essential in their work and or livelihood. Conversely, "No One Gets Left Behind" initiatives, where animals are evacuated alongside owners to designated zones, have proven to increase evacuation compliance, thereby saving human lives and reducing the burden on emergency rescuers.

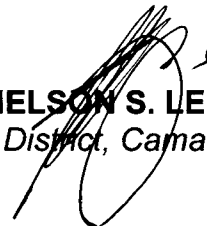
In rural and agricultural zones, the dilemma is economic. For a Filipino farmer, livestock such as a carabao, cow, or small farm animals, represent a "living bank account" and the primary means of production. When evacuation centers refuse livestock, farmers often choose to stay behind in life-threatening conditions to protect their assets. Establishing proactive measures, such as communal high-ground corrals and poultry crates, directly prevents post-disaster poverty and the collapse of local agricultural economies.

Under Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the *Animal Welfare Act of 1998*, as amended by RA 10631, the abandonment of animals is a criminal act.

However, the current lack of inclusive infrastructure forces citizens into an impossible choice between their safety and their legal and moral obligations.

This bill, the "Pet Evacuation and Disaster Safety (PEDS) Act," seeks to bridge this gap by mandating animal-inclusive evacuation plans and safe spaces. This ensures that the humane treatment of animals is no longer an afterthought but a core component of our national resilience strategy.

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


NELSON S. LEGACION
Representative, Third District, Camarines Sur



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AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANIMAL-INCLUSIVE EVACUATION PLANS AND DESIGNATED SAFE SPACES IN EVERY MUNICIPALITY AND CITY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10121 AND REINFORCING THE PROTECTIONS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8485

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the "*Pet Evacuation and Disaster Safety (PEDS) Act.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. The State adopts the "No One Gets Left Behind" Policy. Recognizing the Philippines' extreme vulnerability to tectonic and hydrometeorological hazards due to its location on the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Typhoon Belt, it is the policy of the State to protect the lives, property, and livelihoods of its citizens. This includes the mandatory integration of companion animals and livestock into the national disaster risk reduction and management framework to increase human evacuation compliance and uphold the standards of humane treatment enshrined in Republic Act No. 8485.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act:

- a) *Pet/Companion Animal* refers to any dog, cat, or domesticated animal kept for companionship, domestic use, or as a member of a household;
- b) *Livelihood Livestock and Work Animal* refer to animals used for farming, transport, or as a source of income, which include:
 - 1) Large Cattle such as cows and carabaos; and
 - 2) Small Livestock and Poultry such as pigs, goats, sheep, chickens,

and ducks;

- c) *Service Animal* refers to any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability; and
- d) *Animal Emergency Kit (Go-Bag)* refers to a pre-packed, readily accessible kit designed to sustain an animal for at least three (3) days.
 - 1) For Companion Animals – this should include food, water, bowls, a leash/harness or carrier, sanitation supplies, and vaccination/medical records; and
 - 2) For Livelihood and Work Animals - this should include basic halters or leads, a supply of emergency forage or concentrated feed, clean water containers, and any necessary ownership or health certifications.

SECTION 4. *Mandatory Animal-Inclusive Evacuation Plan.* Every Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (LDRRMO) shall incorporate an "Animal-Inclusive Evacuation Plan" into its disaster protocol, which shall include:

- 1) A system for tracking and identifying pets and livestock within the community;
- 2) Pre-identified transport vehicles for animals during forced evacuations;
- 3) Collaboration with the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) and accredited animal welfare organizations for specialized rescue training; and
- 4) Standardized Signage wherein mandatory posting of clearly labeled, weatherproof, and reflective signs marked "PET-INCLUSIVE EVACUATION AREA" in all designated shelters.

SECTION 5. *Designated Safe Spaces.*

- (a) In Urban Centers - every city and municipality shall ensure that evacuation centers have designated animal-friendly zones with minimum health standards set by the BAI;
- (b) In Agricultural/Rural Zones - LGUs shall designate communal, high-ground corrals for cows and carabaos, ensuring access to clean water and emergency forage to prevent drowning and starvation; and
- (c) For Service Animals - Service animals shall never be separated from their owners and are exempt from being restricted to "pet-only" zones; they shall be allowed in all human-designated areas.

SECTION 6. *Responsibilities of Owners.*

- (a) Owners are encouraged to bring pets and work animals indoors or to designated safe zones at the first signal of a calamity; and
- (b) In extreme cases where owners are unable to bring animals to a shelter,

they are strictly prohibited from locking animals in cages or leaving them tethered. Animals must be moved to a high, safe area with food and water to allow them a chance of survival.

SECTION 7. *Penalties for Neglect.* Any person who willfully leaves an animal tied or confined in a manner that prevents escape from life-threatening hazards during a declared calamity shall be liable under Section 6 of RA 8485. However, no person shall be held liable if the local government failed to provide the mandated evacuation options or safe spaces as required by this Act.

SECTION 8. *Funding and National Counterpart.* LGUs are authorized to utilize their Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (LDRRMF) for the procurement of animal crates, emergency feed, and medical supplies.

For 4th to 6th class municipalities, the National Government through the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) shall provide a fifty percent (50%) counterpart fund for the construction of permanent, flood-resilient animal shelters and livestock corrals.

SECTION 9. *Limited Liability.* Local authorities and registered volunteers shall be immune from civil liability for animal-related incidents, provided they have met the minimum safety and health standards established by the BAI.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Department of Agriculture, the BAI, the NDRRMC, and representatives from accredited animal welfare organizations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations within sixty (60) days of the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 11 *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, and rules or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,