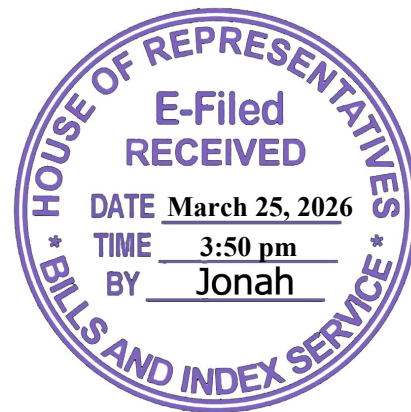


TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
HOUSE BILL NO. 8779



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Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The presence of stray and free-roaming animals in the Philippines has become an increasingly urgent public concern, with significant implications for public safety, public health, and animal welfare.

Recent estimates indicate that the country is home to over 13 million stray dogs and cats, with approximately 11 million dogs and 2 million cats living on the streets. Compounding this issue is the continued prevalence of rabies in the country. According to the Department of Health (DOH), the Philippines recorded 426 rabies-related deaths in 2024, marking a significant and alarming increase in cases in recent years. These figures underscore the serious risks posed by unregulated animal populations, particularly in<sup>1</sup> densely populated areas where human-animal interaction is frequent.

Stray animals are often exposed to hunger, disease, and inhumane conditions. At the same time, their presence on roads contributes to traffic hazards and accidents, placing motorists, pedestrians, and the animals themselves at risk. The lack of accessible and adequately funded animal shelters in many local government units (LGUs) further aggravates the problem, as there are limited facilities to accommodate impounded, rescued, or surrendered animals.

Republic Act No. 8485, as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, otherwise known as the "Animal Welfare Act of 1998," affirms the State's policy to promote animal welfare and prevent cruelty. However, there remains a gap in the law with respect to the institutionalization of local animal shelters as a basic service across all cities and municipalities.

This proposed measure seeks to address this gap by mandating every city and municipality to establish and maintain at least one (1) animal shelter. These shelters shall serve as centers for basic veterinary care, vaccination, disease control, and humane management of domesticated animals, including those that are stray, abandoned, or surrendered. By providing accessible facilities at the local level, this measure will strengthen rabies prevention efforts, improve animal population management, and reduce risks to public safety.

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<sup>1</sup> Cabalza, Dexter. "DOH Records 426 Deaths Due to Rabies in 2024." Philippine Daily Inquirer, 17 Mar. 2025, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2044420/doh-records-426-deaths-due-to-rabies-in-2024>

Ultimately, this measure promotes a humane, science-based, and community-oriented approach to addressing stray animal concerns. It recognizes that animal welfare is intrinsically linked to public health, environmental balance, and the overall well-being of Filipino communities.

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



MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON  
Manila Teachers Party-list

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE )  
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*First Regular Session*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
HOUSE BILL NO. **8779**

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Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON

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AN ACT  
MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANIMAL SHELTERS IN EVERY CITY AND MUNICIPALITY, AND AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8485, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ANIMAL WELFARE ACT OF 1998"

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

SECTION 1. A new section shall be added after Section 5 of Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the "Animal Welfare Act of 1998," to read as follows:

*"Section 6. Every city and municipality shall establish and maintain at least one (1) animal shelter to provide basic care and vaccination services for domesticated animals owned by residents within the locality.*

*Each animal shelter shall have a licensed veterinarian assigned to conduct animal care and health consultations no less than once (1) per week.*

*For purposes of this Act, basic care shall include, but not be limited to: nutritional assessment, food intake consultation, emergency medical care, pain management, parasite control, population well-being monitoring, and disease response.*

*Vaccination services shall include, but not be limited to: anti-rabies immunization and deworming programs.*

*The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), in coordination with local government units (LGUs), shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this section."*

SECTION 2. All succeeding sections of Republic Act No. 8485 are hereby renumbered accordingly.

SECTION 3. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Department of Agriculture (DA), through the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the local government units (LGUs) and the Department of Health (DOH), shall prepare and issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 4. Separability Clause. — If any section or provision of this Act is held invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 5. Repealing Clause. — All laws, decrees, issuances, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. Effectivity Clause. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved*