

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL NO. **8780**

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. These calamities not only threaten human life and property but also endanger livestock and working animals that are vital to the livelihood and economic stability of many Filipino communities.

Livestock and working animals serve as critical sources of income, food security, transportation, and agricultural productivity. Despite their importance, disaster preparedness and response frameworks have historically focused primarily on human evacuation, often leaving animals neglected, abandoned, or exposed to harm during emergencies. This not only results in economic losses for affected communities but also raises serious concerns regarding animal welfare.

Republic Act No. 8485, as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, otherwise known as the Animal Welfare Act, prohibits cruelty, neglect, and abandonment of animals. However, there remains a gap in ensuring that these protections are effectively implemented during disaster situations. There is currently no comprehensive and standardized set of guidelines specifically addressing the rescue, evacuation, and temporary shelter of livestock and working animals during calamities.

This proposed measure seeks to address this gap by mandating the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and other relevant agencies, to promulgate clear and operational guidelines for the rescue and protection of livestock and working animals in times of disaster. It also strengthens coordination mechanisms among national agencies, local government units, and stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, to ensure a more organized and humane response. Moreover, the bill introduces a system of registration at the barangay level to facilitate efficient identification, tracking, and rescue planning for animals during emergencies. This will enable faster and more effective interventions while minimizing risks to both human responders and animal owners.

By institutionalizing these measures, the State reaffirms its commitment to a balanced and healthful ecology, the humane treatment of animals, and the protection of livelihoods. Ultimately, safeguarding livestock and working animals during calamities contributes not only to animal welfare but also to the resilience and recovery of affected communities.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nina Lacson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nina" and last name "Lacson" clearly distinguishable.

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

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AN ACT
MANDATING THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL TO PROMULGATE GUIDELINES FOR THE RESCUE OF
LIVESTOCK AND WORKING ANIMALS IN CASES OF CALAMITY

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 “Animal Rescue in Calamities Act of 2025.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. The State also recognizes the ownership of livestock and working animals as indispensable to the business of several Filipinos.

Consistent with Republic Act No. 8485, as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, which prohibits cruelty, neglect, and abandonment of animals, the State shall ensure that these protections are operationalized during calamities. Accordingly, the government shall establish clear guidelines for the rescue, evacuation, and temporary shelter of livestock and working animals in disaster situations. By safeguarding these animals, the government affirms its duty to protect both human welfare and the economic survival of communities that depend on them.

Through this policy, the State affirms its duty to safeguard both human welfare and the economic survival of communities, while exercising humane treatment of animals in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

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

- a. “*Livestock*” refers to domesticated animals raised in an agricultural setting to produce labor and commodities such as, but not limited to, meat, eggs, fur, or leather.
- b. “*Working animal*” refers to an animal, usually domesticated, that is kept by humans and trained to perform tasks.
- c. “*Calamity*” refers to a disastrous event marked by great loss and lasting distress and/or suffering.

SECTION 4. *Scope.* – This Act shall apply to all livestock and working animals, whether publicly or privately owned.

SECTION 5. *Roles and Responsibilities.* – The Committee on Animal Welfare attached to the Department of Agriculture, as mandated by Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the Animal Welfare Act, as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, in coordination with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), shall identify, prepare, and provide policy guidance and technical assistance for the rescue, evacuation, and temporary shelter of livestock and working animals in cases of calamity.

In line with Section 6 and Section 7 of R.A. 10631, which prohibit neglect and abandonment of animals, this Act operationalizes such protections by requiring owners of livestock and working animals to register them with their respective barangays. Barangays shall maintain local records, in coordination with the Bureau of Animal Industry and municipal agricultural offices, to facilitate rescue and evacuation planning.

In the event of a calamity, barangays and animal owners shall take all reasonable measures to secure the safety of animals within a reasonable period following the evacuation of residents, subject to the paramount consideration of human safety. Where such measures are not possible due to risks to human life, the matter shall be referred to the NDRRMC for appropriate action, ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to minimize economic loss to animal owners.

SECTION 6. *Socio-civic organizations and the Private Sector.* – This Act shall also empower the private sector in engaging and partnering with the government in promulgating policy measures with regard to the rescue of livestock and working animals in cases of calamity. Non-governmental organizations, civic organizations, the academe, people's organizations, and the like shall be tapped by the government in providing assistance in the promulgation and enforcement of such guidelines.

Such participation shall be consistent with the humane treatment standards and anti-cruelty provisions under R.A. 10631, thereby ensuring that rescue operations uphold animal welfare principles while complementing disaster response effort.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the NDRRMC, the Bureau of Animal Industry, and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity. These rules shall harmonize disaster rescue protocols with the protections against cruelty, neglect, and abandonment provided under R.A. 10631.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,