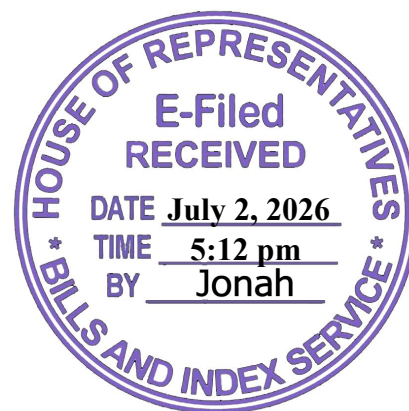


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10008



Introduced by: **REP. TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Pets, livestock, poultry, working animals, and other domesticated animals are often placed at risk during typhoons, floods, fires, earthquakes, volcanic activity, and other disasters because evacuation and response plans do not always provide for animal transport, temporary shelter, feeding, veterinary care, identification, and reunification. In many communities, families delay or refuse evacuation because they cannot leave their animals behind, while farmers and fisherfolk may suffer serious livelihood losses when livestock, poultry, or working animals are injured, abandoned, or lost.

This measure recognizes that animal welfare is closely connected to public health, evacuation compliance, livelihood protection, food security, and community recovery. Companion animals provide emotional support and household security, while livestock, poultry, and working animals are livelihood assets that help families recover after disasters. A disaster response system that completely ignores animals may unintentionally place both people and animals in greater danger.

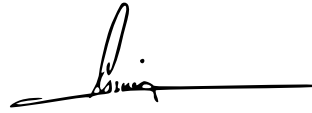
Consistent with Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the “Animal Welfare Act of 1998,” as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, this bill seeks to ensure that humane treatment, protection against cruelty and neglect, disease prevention, and responsible animal handling are observed before, during, and after disasters and emergency displacement.

This bill institutionalizes animal-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management by requiring local government units to include animal rescue, evacuation, temporary shelter, veterinary support, identification, and reunification protocols in their disaster plans. It also strengthens coordination among the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), the Office of Civil Defense, the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Bureau of Animal Industry, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), local government units, veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, farmers’ and fisherfolk groups, rescue groups, and the private sector.

At the same time, this bill expressly provides that the protection of human life and safety shall remain the paramount consideration in all animal rescue and shelter operations. Animal rescue must be humane and practical, but it must never require rescuers, public officers, volunteers, evacuees, or animal owners to expose themselves to serious and immediate danger.

By integrating animals into disaster preparedness, response, and recovery planning, this measure promotes humane governance, reduces abandonment and avoidable animal suffering, protects livelihoods, supports public health, and helps build more resilient Filipino communities.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Toby', followed by a horizontal line.

TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO

Representative

Lone District, Navotas City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10008

Introduced by: **REP. TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO**

**AN ACT INTEGRATING ANIMAL RESCUE, EVACUATION, TEMPORARY SHELTER,
AND WELFARE PROTOCOLS INTO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND
MANAGEMENT PLANS**

*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 and Shelter During Disasters Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of State Policy.* —It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect animal welfare, public health, livelihood assets, food security, and community resilience by integrating animal rescue, evacuation, temporary shelter, veterinary support, identification, and reunification protocols into disaster risk reduction and management planning.

Consistent with Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the “Animal Welfare Act of 1998,” as amended by Republic Act No. 10631, the State shall ensure that protections against cruelty, neglect, and abandonment of animals are observed before, during, and after disasters, calamities, and emergency displacement.

The State recognizes that many Filipino households depend on companion animals, livestock, poultry, working animals, and other domesticated animals for livelihood, safety, food security, emotional support, and community recovery. Accordingly, animal welfare shall form part of humane, practical, and community-based disaster preparedness and response, subject always to the paramount consideration of human life and safety.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* — For purposes of this Act:

- a. *Animal evacuation plan* refers to the component of a disaster risk reduction and management plan covering the rescue, transport, temporary shelter, feeding, water provision, veterinary care, identification, owner tracing, and reunification of covered animals;
- b. *Animal-inclusive disaster planning* refers to the integration of animal rescue, transport, temporary shelter, feeding, water provision, veterinary care, identification, owner tracing, and reunification procedures into national and local disaster risk reduction and management plans;
- c. *Companion animal* refers to any domesticated animal kept primarily for companionship, emotional support, security, household care, or similar purposes, including dogs, cats, and other animals under human custody;
- d. *Covered animals* refer to companion animals, livestock, poultry, working animals, and other domesticated animals under human care;
- e. *Animal owner or custodian* refers to any person, family, farm operator, cooperative, association,

enterprise, institution, or other entity having ownership, possession, custody, or control of a covered animal;

- f. *Reunification* refers to the process of identifying, tracing, and returning rescued or sheltered animals to their owners or lawful custodians after a disaster, evacuation, or emergency displacement;
- g. *Temporary animal shelter* refers to a designated area, facility, enclosure, holding site, or other safe space for covered animals during emergency displacement; and
- h. *Veterinary support* refers to basic health assessment, emergency treatment, disease prevention, vaccination, when necessary, sanitation measures, quarantine guidance, and other animal health services during disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

SEC. 4. *Scope.* —This Act shall apply to companion animals, livestock, poultry, working animals, and other domesticated animals under human care, whether privately owned, publicly owned, community-kept, or maintained by farms, cooperatives, shelters, institutions, or enterprises.

Nothing in this Act shall be interpreted to require any person, rescuer, public officer, volunteer, or animal owner to undertake animal rescue or evacuation when doing so would pose a serious and immediate risk to human life or safety.

SEC. 5. *Animal-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Standards.* —

The following minimum standards and program requirements are hereby established:

- a. LGUs shall include animal rescue, evacuation, temporary shelter, feeding, water provision, veterinary support, identification, and reunification protocols in their local disaster risk reduction and management plans;
- b. Barangays, cities, municipalities, and provinces shall identify, whenever feasible, safe holding areas, temporary animal shelters, transport arrangements, feed and water sources, veterinary partners, sanitation procedures, and public information systems for animal-related disaster response;
- c. Human evacuation centers may designate separate and safe companion animal areas when feasible, subject to sanitation, safety, space, public health, and facility management rules;
- d. LGUs may maintain a simple animal registry, inventory, or community animal profile, particularly for livestock, poultry, working animals, and other livelihood-related animals, to support evacuation planning and post-disaster recovery;
- e. Lack of prior registration shall not be used as the sole ground to deny emergency animal rescue, temporary shelter, or veterinary assistance when such assistance is otherwise practicable;
- f. Animal evacuation and shelter procedures shall include reasonable measures for tagging, identification, owner tracing, and reunification of animals after the disaster or emergency displacement; and
- g. All animal rescue and shelter operations shall observe humane handling, disease prevention, sanitation, and public safety standards.

SEC. 6. *Lead Implementing Agencies and Coordination.* —The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), through the Office of Civil Defense, shall ensure the integration of animal-inclusive disaster protocols into national and local disaster risk reduction and management systems.

The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Animal Industry and in coordination with the Committee on Animal Welfare, shall provide technical standards on animal welfare, veterinary support, humane handling, temporary shelter, disease prevention, and related animal care measures.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall assist in the coordination with local government units, barangays, local disaster risk reduction and management offices, city and municipal veterinary offices, agricultural offices, and other concerned local authorities.

The implementing agencies shall coordinate with accredited animal welfare organizations, veterinary associations, cooperatives, farmers' and fisherfolk organizations, rescue groups, civic organizations, the academe, and the private sector for training, technical assistance, rescue support, and resource mobilization.

SEC. 7. *Duties of LGUs and Barangays.* —Local government units and barangays shall, subject to available resources and local risk conditions:

- a. Include animal-related risks and needs in disaster preparedness, evacuation, and recovery planning;
- b. Identify possible temporary animal holding areas or shelter sites separate from, or properly managed within, human evacuation centers;
- c. Maintain coordination with local veterinarians, agricultural officers, livestock inspectors, animal welfare organizations, and community volunteers;
- d. Conduct information campaigns on responsible animal evacuation, tagging, emergency supplies, and disaster preparedness for animal owners;
- e. Assist in the recording, identification, tracing, and reunification of rescued or sheltered animals; and
- f. Take reasonable measures to reduce abandonment, injury, disease outbreak, and livelihood loss involving animals during disasters.

SEC. 8. *Paramount Consideration of Human Life and Safety.* —

In all animal rescue, evacuation, and shelter operations, the protection of human life and safety shall remain the paramount consideration.

Animal rescue may be undertaken only when conditions reasonably allow such action without exposing rescuers, volunteers, public officers, animal owners, evacuees, or other persons to serious and immediate danger.

Where direct rescue is not immediately possible due to danger to human life, the matter shall be referred to the proper disaster response authorities for appropriate action when conditions permit.

SEC. 9. *Prohibited Acts, Penalties, and Remedies.* —

The following acts shall be dealt with in accordance with existing animal welfare, disaster risk reduction and management, local government, administrative, civil, and criminal laws:

- a. Cruelty to animals during disaster preparedness, evacuation, shelter, or recovery operations;
- b. Unjustified abandonment of covered animals in violation of applicable law;
- c. Diversion, misuse, or unauthorized sale of animal relief goods, feed, medicine, supplies, or donations intended for disaster-affected animals;
- d. Obstruction of lawful animal rescue, evacuation, temporary shelter, veterinary support, or reunification operations;
- e. Misrepresentation in claiming ownership of rescued or sheltered animals; and
- f. Violation of lawful animal welfare, sanitation, quarantine, or public health measures issued under this Act.

Nothing in this Act shall prevent the filing of appropriate criminal, civil, administrative, or disciplinary actions under existing laws.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the lead implementing agencies, in coordination with concerned agencies, local government units, veterinary offices, animal welfare organizations, farmers' and fisherfolk groups, and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,