AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MANDATORY EVACUATION CENTER IN ALL CITIES, PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippines is susceptible to natural hazards, unforeseen disasters and other calamities because of its location along the so-called “Pacific Ring of Fire; an area where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are more recurring than in any other areas of the world. The country fronts the Pacific Ocean, making it vulnerable to frequent typhoons and related weather disturbances regularly especially at the onset of climate change.

These catastrophic incidences create a disastrous state in the lives of the Filipino. Among the Filipinos, the underprivileged are the ones who suffer the most during these times. They have lost their shelters; they have no food to eat; sometimes, even lives are taken by these calamities. Indeed the country cannot avoid these natural hazards, but the government can reduce the effects to the lives and living of the Filipinos. Thus, there is an urgent need for the State to establish evacuation centers in all cities, provinces, and municipalities.

These mandatory evacuation centers will be able to provide them temporary shelters even before the forecasted disaster actually happens. Further, while the victims are temporarily staying in the evacuation centers, the government can not only cater to their basic needs, but can also guarantee their safety, promote their social wellbeing, and guard their welfare while they recover and rebuild their homes and their lives.

To emphasize, this bill seeks to establish the availability of mandatory evacuation centers not only in some chosen areas of the archipelago but in all cities, provinces and municipalities ensuring equal protection among the citizens.

While the State cannot control the indefinite occurrence of these calamities, it can however control the preparedness of the government and its people in facing such
unfortunate incidents. The more prepared we are, the less impact these disasters can leave in the lives of the people.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE JR.,
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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. Title of the Act. — This Act shall be known as the "Mandatory Evacuation Center Act of 2020."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect the people's right to life and property that is rooted and embedded in our Constitution, and to promote their general welfare. It is for this reason that the establishment of an evacuation center shall be undertaken in all cities, provinces, and municipalities to address the vulnerability of the Philippines to the impacts of climate change and other human-made disasters. This is also to strengthen the country's institutional capacity for building the resilience of local communities to adhere and adopt the universal standards of humanitarian assistance.

Sec. 3. Establishment/Construction of Evacuation Centers. There shall be an established evacuation center in every city, province and municipality throughout the country which shall provide basic needs and assistance to all evacuees, and shall serve as their temporary shelter that will guarantee the safety and wellbeing of all who have become victims of natural calamities or any other hazards/emergency events such as, typhoons, floods, fire, storm surges, weather disturbances and outbreak of illnesses/diseases that may be cause imminent danger to their life and property.
Sec. 4 Evacuation Center Requirements. — The following shall be the minimum requirements for every evacuation center that will be established under this Act:

**Location/Designation** - each location for every evacuation center shall be determined by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in close coordination with the LGUs concerned.

The location shall be determined based on the following criteria:

a. It must be centrally located in the community;
b. It must be of a safe distance from large trees, structures where hazardous materials are used and/or stored, or high-voltage power lines;
c. It must be near a health facility;
d. It must be located on geotechnical stable land to avoid risk of landslides and/or exposure to potential landslide of adjacent lands;
e. It must not be located near military base camps, camps of insurgent 24 groups, power plants, factories, and other areas where the occurrence of human-induced disasters are very high.

**Structural Building Capacity** — The evacuation centers shall be constructed and designed to withstand super typhoons or wind speeds of at least three hundred (300) kilometers per hour and seismic activity of at least 8.0 magnitude. Evacuation centers should be calamity-resilient, be built with sturdy materials, and be built in accordance with the specifications of Republic Act No. 6541, otherwise known as the "National Building Code of the Philippines" and should be at par with the standards set by the International Building Code.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall be in charge of the construction of evacuation centers and formulating the building specifications therefor based on standards, issuances, and other guidelines set by the DPWH.

The DPWH shall also ensure that the construction of such evacuation centers is in accordance with the abovementioned requirements during its construction phase.

The specifications of the evacuation centers shall be periodically reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the DPWH every three years.

The structural capacity should at least meet the following parameters:
a. The structure must be elevated in such a manner that it will withstand likely impact from a high tide storm surge level of at least ten (10) meters;
b. The structure must be a minimum of one (1) meter above the average flood level in the area where the same shall be built; and
c. The structure shall not be less than nine (9) meters in height and designed in accordance with earthquake load standards.

**Amenities and Accessibility of the Evacuation Center** — The evacuation centers shall be well-ventilated and shall have the capacity to accommodate a large number of evacuees. The centers shall have the following minimum amenities:

a. Sleeping quarters for the evacuees;
b. Separate shower and toilet facilities designated for males and females, with a facility-to-user ratio of persons;
c. Amenities to enable access thereto by and accommodation of the disabled;
d. Provisions for emergency/exit doors;
e. Food preparation areas which are provided with adequate ventilation;
f. Trash and waste segregation and collection areas;
g. Health care areas which shall include an isolation and/or quarantine area for potentially infectious persons;
h. Rainwater harvesting and collection facilities; and
i. Other facilities prescribed in DSWD-DILG-DOH-DepED Joint Memorandum Circular No.1 Series of 2013, entitled "Guidelines on Evacuation Center and Management."

**Sec. 5. Operations and Management of the Evacuation Center.** The LGUs concerned shall be primarily responsible for the operation, supervision, and management of evacuation centers established under this Act. They are also hereby authorized to issue rules and regulations on the proper use and maintenance of the evacuation centers.

The mandatory audit of infrastructures used as evacuation centers shall be conducted by Provincial/City/Municipal Engineer and/or the building official at least 30 once every year and immediately after the occurrence of a hazard or disaster event.

**Sec. 6. Role of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.** — The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), or its successor, shall be the primary lead agency which shall oversee the implementation of this act.

**Sec. 7. Appropriations.** — The amount necessary to fund the construction and maintenance of evacuation centers under this Act shall be sourced from a portion of the general appropriations of the DPWH. Every year thereafter, the amounts necessary for the
construction and maintenance of evacuation centers shall be included in the list of programs as part of annual budget in the General Appropriations Act.

The appropriations necessary for the operation and management of the evacuation centers shall be charged against the funds of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council (LDRRMC), or its successor.

Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. -- Within ninety days (90) after the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Local Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the DPWH, in coordination with the appropriate government agencies concerned, shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

Sec. 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, executive orders, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Sec. 11. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved