

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5593**



INTRODUCED BY CONGRESSMAN ALFRED VARGAS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters as the country is located at the rim of the turbulent Pacific Ocean and in the Pacific Ring of Fire. Recognizing the need to protect the rights of citizens and prepare them in the occurrence of calamities, the Philippine Government enacted Republic Act No. 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010.

Among the key provisions of the said legislation is the integration of disaster risk reduction education into the school curricula and the Sangguniang Kabataan Program. Furthermore, the law also mandated the training on emergency response and preparedness for the employees of the public sector. It is important to note, however, that there is a need to provide our students with the practical knowledge on disaster risk reduction and management and not just the theoretical understanding. Also, we must also provide proper DRR awareness and training for the people in the private sector and medical institutions.

To further strengthen the Filipinos' resiliency to disasters, this bill seeks to provide for the regular conduct of fire, earthquake, and other hazardous phenomena drills in schools, school buses, private workplaces and healthcare institutions and set the guidelines on how these institutions can properly respond in cases of fire, earthquakes, and other calamities.

This Representation firmly believes that education is the key to true preparedness. It is the goal of this proposal to inculcate disaster risk reduction in the minds of all Filipinos to ensure the nation's safety and protection against the Big One, a super typhoon, or any disaster that comes our way.

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


ALFRED VARGAS

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AN ACT

MANDATING THE CONDUCT OF FIRE, EARTHQUAKE, AND OTHER HAZARDOUS PHENOMENA DRILLS IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS, SCHOOL BUSES, PRIVATE OFFICES, AND HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS

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 "Preparedness in Buildings during Fire, Earthquake, and other Hazardous Phenomena Act."

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.*- It is hereby declared the policy of the State to train its people in the quick and proper response to times of fires, earthquakes, and other hazardous phenomena so as to reduce the risks on their lives and properties.

SEC. 3. *Drills in Educational Establishments.* -

- a. Fire, earthquake, and other disaster drills shall be held at least once every quarter of the school year in educational establishments where such establishments constitute the major function of a building.
- b. The drills shall include practice and instruction concerning the location, use and operation of emergency exits, fire escapes, doors and fire extinguishers and other facilities provided for such purpose in buildings as well as the proper evacuation of buildings by students, teachers, and other school personnel in the event of fire, earthquakes and other hazardous phenomena.
- c. Fire, earthquake, and other disaster drills shall include complete evacuation of all persons from the building, if necessary. Teachers and personnel shall be trained in assisting students in the evacuation of a building in times of fire, earthquakes, and other hazardous phenomena.
- d. A record of all fire, earthquake, and other disaster drills shall be kept and persons in charge of buildings shall file quarterly written reports with the respective Regional Disaster Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) of each region, giving the time and date of each drill held.

SEC. 4. Drills in School Buses.-

- a. All schools using or contracting school buses and other vehicles for transporting school children shall conduct at least two emergency evacuation drills on school buses and other vehicles during each school year. The first emergency evacuation drill shall be conducted during the first quarter of the school year and the second during the third quarter.
- b. Each drill shall include practice and instruction concerning the proper evacuation of buses in cases of fire, earthquakes, and other hazardous phenomena.
- c. Bus operators and drivers shall be trained and instructed by the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) with proper training and instructions to enable them to carry out the provisions of this Act.
- d. The school principal or bus operator/owner shall certify in writing to the RDRRMC that the drills required herein have been conducted.
- e. Operators and drivers of public utility vehicles such as jeepneys and buses shall likewise be provided with proper training and instructions to enable them to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. Drills in Private Offices. -

- a. The employers and building administrators of private workplaces shall be required to conduct safety drills at least once every three months. Hence, there shall be at least four (4) drills in private workplaces in a year.
- b. The drills shall include practice and instruction concerning the location, use and operation of emergency exits, fire escapes, doors and fire extinguishers and other facilities provided for such purpose in buildings as well as the proper evacuation of buildings by employees in the event of fire, earthquakes and other hazardous phenomena.
- c. Fire and earthquake drills shall include complete evacuation of all persons from the building, if necessary. Human resources personnel of private workplaces shall be trained in assisting employees in the evacuation of a building in times of fire, earthquakes, and other hazardous phenomena.
- d. A record of all fire, earthquake, and other disaster drills shall be kept and persons in charge of buildings shall file quarterly written reports with the respective Regional Disaster Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) of each region, giving the time and date of each drill held.

SEC. 6. Drills in Healthcare Institutions.-

- a. Administrators of hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, orphanages and other building or structures used for the care of or occupied by the sick, infirm, or injured shall be required to conduct safety drills at least once every three months. Hence, there shall be at least four (4) drills in health-care institutions in a year.
- b. Said drills shall be conducted with the administration and personnel of the hospital, nursing home, or other building or structure used for the care of or occupied by the sick, infirm, or injured persons.

- c. A record of all fire and earthquake drills shall be kept, and person in charge of buildings shall file quarterly written reports with the RDRRMC, giving the time and date of each drill held.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Agency.* – The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and its regional and local offices shall oversee the implementation of this Act in each locality and shall keep a record of the reports submitted by school officials, healthcare institution administration, and school bus operators and drivers.

SEC. 8. *Penalties.* – Building administrators or any person in charge of the administration or management of educational establishments, healthcare institutions, and school bus operators and drivers who refuses or fails to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be given a warning for the first offense; a fine of one thousand pesos (Php1,000.00) for the second offense; a fine of five thousand pesos (Php5,000.00) for the third offense; and imprisonment of one (1) month and a fine of ten thousand pesos (Php10,000.00) for subsequent offenses. The fines shall go to the funds of the local NDRRMC office and shall be used for disaster prevention and mitigation programs of the locality.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.*– All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.*– This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,