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SENATE
S. No. 805

RECORDED BY:

Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPURPOSE GYM IN ALL MUNICIPALITIES AND CITIES TO SERVE AS EVACUATION CENTER DURING TIMES OF CALAMITY OR DISASTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Explanatory Note

Schools have traditionally been utilized as default evacuation centers in times of calamities, disasters, conflicts, and emergencies. Schools however, are not well equipped to accommodate evacuees since these lack the necessary facilities for displaced families.

The use of schools as evacuation centers for displaced families also gives rise to another group of displaced individuals: the students. The education of children is severely affected when families cannot immediately vacate school premises because their houses have not yet been repaired or reconstructed. This relegates students to makeshift classrooms that may not be conducive to learning. Moreover, its cost can take away from the meager budget what could be better utilized for more permanent solutions to problems brought about by disasters.

The construction of multipurpose gyms in the country's 1,489 municipalities¹ and 145 cities² nationwide will be a permanent recourse for evacuation in times of calamities and natural or man-made disasters. The gym must be able to withstand typhoons, earthquakes and other disasters. It must be designed to have space that can be used flexibly for social activities, sporting events, and as sleeping quarters during the evacuation. The multipurpose gym must be well-ventilated, able to accommodate large groups of people, and must have ample bathing and sanitation facilities. When not in use as a refuge center, the multipurpose gym, which should be in a location where people and emergency rescue personnel can easily access, can be a storehouse for disaster rescue equipment and emergency supplies.

With the reality of stronger typhoons brought about by climate change and the geographical location of the country making it the second most disaster-prone country³, seeking temporary solutions to the displacement of families by using schools as evacuation centers must be stopped. There should be no tradeoff between protecting lives and the education of students. A better and more permanent facility must be made available to people in times of emergencies.

In the light of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

RALPH G. RECTO


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¹ As of 31 March 2016. <http://nap.psa.gov.ph/>

² Ibid.

³ United Nations University World Risk Report 2014 <http://ehs.unu.edu/news/news/world-risk-report-2014.html>

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Multipurpose Gym in all
2 Municipalities and Cities Act of 2016”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It shall be the policy of the State to protect the people’s
4 right to life and property, and to promote their general welfare. Towards this end, the State, in
5 cognizance of the vulnerability of the Philippines to calamities and disasters, shall provide for
6 the construction of a multipurpose gym in every municipality and city to serve primarily as
7 refuge for displaced families in times of calamities and disasters.

8 **SEC. 3. Construction of a Multipurpose Gym.** – The Department of Public Works
9 and Highways (DPWH) shall undertake the construction of a multipurpose gym in every
10 municipality and city throughout the country which shall serve as a civic center and as an
11 evacuation center for residents during calamities and disasters: *Provided*, That any such
12 construction is based on a program prepared by DPWH in coordination with a representative of
13 the municipality and city concerned: *Provided, further*, That the municipal or city mayor shall be
14 furnished with the pertinent documents, data and information before any construction shall
15 commence: *Provided, finally*, That Local Government Units (LGUs) may include in their
16 respective local infrastructure program the construction of a multipurpose gym.

17 **SEC. 4. Construction Priority.** – The DPWH shall give construction priority to third to
18 sixth class municipalities, especially those located in disaster-prone areas. DPWH shall
19 coordinate with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the LGUs
20 concerned to determine which disaster-prone areas to prioritize in the construction of the facility.

21 Priority shall also be given to municipalities whose residents will volunteer labor services
22 for the construction thereof and for this purpose, DPWH shall issue the necessary guidelines.

23 **SEC. 5. Multipurpose Gym Requirements.** – The facilities shall, at the minimum, have
24 the following requirements:

1 a. *Location* – The multipurpose gym should be easily accessible to evacuees and
2 to emergency rescue personnel. It should be kept at a safe distance from danger
3 areas or hazards. LGUs concerned shall coordinate with the Department of
4 Environment and Natural Resources to identify the appropriate location of the
5 multipurpose gym.

6 b. *Structural Capacity* – The multipurpose gyms must be able to withstand wind
7 speeds of at least 155 miles per hour and seismic activity of at least 7.0
8 magnitude. The DPWH shall formulate the building specifications for the
9 multipurpose gyms and shall ensure the compliance with these specifications
10 during the construction of the facilities. DPWH shall periodically review, and if
11 necessary, revise the specifications as needed.

12 c. *Amenities* – The multipurpose gym must be well-ventilated and able to
13 accommodate large numbers of evacuees. It shall have, at the minimum, the
14 following amenities:

- 15 1. Floor area devoid of permanent fixtures to be used flexibly for
16 assemblies, sports events, and as sleeping quarters for evacuees;
- 17 2. Shower and toilet facilities; and
- 18 3. Isolated area that can be used as a clinic in times of evacuations.

19 **SEC. 6. *Operation and Management of the Multipurpose Gym.*** – The operation and
20 management of the multipurpose gym shall be under the office of the municipal or city mayor.
21 For purposes of this Act, LGUs concerned are hereby authorized to issue rules and regulations on
22 the use of the facility and to impose minimal charges as may be necessary for the maintenance
23 and minimal repairs of the facility.

24 **SEC. 7. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the immediate implementation of
25 the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DPWH.
26 Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be
27 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

28 The LGUs are authorized to utilize local funds as may be provided in their respective
29 appropriation ordinances for the implementation of this Act.

30 **SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within thirty (30) days from the
31 approval of this Act, the DPWH shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective
32 implementation of the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued
33 pursuant to this Act shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in two (2) national
34 newspapers of general circulation.

35 **SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.*** – In the event that any provision of this Act is declared
36 unconstitutional or invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected by such
37 declaration.

1 **SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or portions
2 thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

3 **SEC. 11. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
4 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,