

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4233



Introduced by Representative Richard I. Gomez

EXPLANATORY NOTE

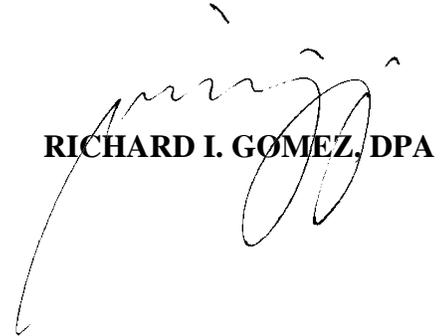
The Province of Leyte has experienced numerous natural disasters that affected thousands of people. On November 5, 1991, the second deadliest typhoon in the Philippines, Typhoon “Uring” (Thelma), triggered flash floods in the province, resulting in 4,000 deaths, 3,000 injured, and 2,500 reported missing. In recent history, one of the most destructive typhoons in the country, Super Typhoon “Yolanda” (Haiyan), ravaged Eastern Visayas, including the Province of Leyte, and claimed at least 6,201 lives. In 2021, amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the province was once again challenged as Typhoons “Odette” and “Agaton” which affected 245,375 families or 984,922 individuals in the southern part of Leyte Island.

In these disasters and calamities, it is often the people who are left with the burden of rebuilding their lives. Aside from the direct effects of the disasters, there are underlying consequences that further exacerbate the situations of the people. During disasters when people are just trying to survive, Filipinos are denied their basic rights to a habitable living space with privacy and dignity, whenever they need to evacuate. And because schools and learning centers are converted as makeshift emergency shelters, by default, our children’s right to education is also jeopardized in the process.

Hence, there is a compelling need to address the quality and availability of evacuation centers, most especially in the Fourth District of Leyte. As a “center,” the proposed Life Centers under this measure shall not only provide temporary shelter to those affected by disasters and calamities, but also provide the basic needs of the displaced families, who may not be able to return to their homes for an extended period of time. This response shall assist and empower the residents of the Fourth District of Leyte in the process of restoring their lives back into full normalcy. Once established, these Life Centers could also alternatively serve as community centers to function as

multipurpose centers. These Life Centers shall become a symbol of hope to the people of the Fourth District of Leyte and the entire province.

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



RICHARD I. GOMEZ, DPA

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING LIFE CENTERS SERVING AS DISASTER EMERGENCY AND DISPLACEMENT CENTERS IN EACH OF THE CITY OF ORMOC AND THE MUNICIPALITIES OF PALOMPON, ALBUERA, MERIDA, ISABEL, KANANGA, AND MATAG-OB IN THE FOURTH DISTRICT, PROVINCE OF LEYTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “*Fourth District of Leyte Disaster Emergency and Displacement Centers Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Establishment of the Fourth District of Leyte Integrated Disaster Emergency and Displacement Center.* - There shall be established a set of centers that shall be known as the “Fourth District of Leyte Integrated Disaster Emergency and Displacement Centers,” hereinafter referred to as “Life Centers.” There shall be one (1) Life Center constructed in each of the City of Ormoc and the Municipalities of Palompon, Albuera, Merida, Isabel, Kananga, and Matag-ob in the Province of Leyte.

SEC. 3. *Objectives, Functions and Features.* -- The Life Centers shall serve as evacuation centers during disaster, calamities or emergencies, providing temporary shelter and other basic needs to persons evacuated and/or displaced by calamities, whether natural or man-made. The Life Centers must have (but not limited to) the following features and characteristics:

- A) Decent living quarters for evacuated and/or displaced families;

- B) Availability of clean toilets and bathrooms, with a ratio of one (1) facility for every twenty (20) evacuees;
- C) Food preparation area;
- D) Trauma and other medical and rehabilitation services to victims of calamities;
- E) Other necessary amenities required for displaced families that are unable to immediately return to their homes after disasters; and
- F) The Life Center building must be disaster resilient and compliant with the National Building Code of the Philippines.

SEC 4. *Construction of Life Centers.* — The construction of Life Centers shall be undertaken by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) under the supervision of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) of the Department of National Defense (DND). Once established, the local government unit (LGU) concerned shall undertake the operation and maintenance of the Life Centers.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the construction and establishment of the Life Centers shall initially be appropriated from the budget of the DPWH and shall thereafter be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, as part of the budget of the DPWH. The amount necessary for the maintenance and operation of Life Centers shall be appropriated from the budgets of concerned LGUs.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and in effect.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* — Any other law, issuance or part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,