

HONORABLE EMMARIE M. OUANO-DIZON

Chairperson
 Committee on People's Participation
 House of Representatives
 Quezon City

Dear **REPRESENTATIVE DIZON**,

This refers to your request for comments and recommendations on the following House Bills, namely:

House Bill (HB) No.	Title	Author
1391	"Good Samaritan Act of 2022"	Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy Party List - BH
1949	"Good Samaritan Act of 2022"	Rep. Yedda Marie K. Romualdez and Rep. June A. Acidre Party List – TINGOG
5145	"Good Samaritan Act of 2022"	Rep. Franz S. Pumaren Quezon City, 3 rd District
1007	"Emergency Volunteer Protection Act"	Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas Pangasinan, 6 th District
1439	"Emergency Volunteer Protection Act of 2022"	Rep. Jose Maria R. Zubiri Jr. Bukidnon, 3 rd District
5584	"Emergency Volunteer Protection Act of 2022"	Rep. Florida P. Robes San Jose Del Monte City, Lone District
5191	"Volunteer Protection Act of 2022"	Rep. Ernesto "Ernix" M. Dionisio, Jr. Manila, 1 st District
4405	An Act To Declare December of Every Year as "National Volunteers Month" In The Entire Country, Amending For The Purpose Republic Act No. 9418, Otherwise Known As the "Volunteer Act of 2007"	Rep. Jorge "Patrol" Bustos Party List - PATROL

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) values volunteerism and acts of community engagement. Likewise, it recognizes the contribution of volunteers in uplifting the quality of life of marginalized individuals and communities which it is mandated to serve.

In fact, the DSWD has developed the National Volunteer Program which provides opportunities for individuals, groups, and organizations to extend voluntary services in the implementation of social welfare and development programs and services with the objective of developing, promoting, and expanding the spirit of volunteerism. It is on this note that the DSWD expanded its volunteer opportunities particularly its Disaster Management Program by implementing the DSWD Volunteers on Disaster Risk Management and Response considering that the culture of volunteerism in the nation and the substantial number of Filipinos who actively participate in disaster management have significantly reduced the effects of catastrophes on vulnerable communities. Moreover, it has been observed that the volunteers have become significant partners of the DSWD's disaster response and recovery operations, therefore, it is only fitting and in their best interest to provide a policy protecting them.

With this in mind, we submit for the Committee's consideration, the following inputs and recommendations:

1. It is suggested that the proposed bills be consolidated, considering that all the bills seek to protect or exempt volunteers from liability when acting in good faith to assist another who is in danger, wounded, or requires immediate assistance. With respect to the liability of the volunteers, we defer to the expertise of the Department of Justice.
2. It is also suggested to identify the source of funds of the honorarium to be given to the volunteers who have participated in any disaster, risk, emergency, or rescue training, mission, operation, or initiative, as stipulated in Section 7 of House Bill No. 5584.
3. Furthermore, stress debriefing is advised to be given to the volunteers during critical incidents, in addition to the honorarium.
4. Finally, since the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) is the government agency mandated to promote and coordinate volunteer programs and services in the Philippines, it is suggested that it be given the authority to manage the selection of volunteers and the supervision of volunteer sectors and organizations.

On a final note, the DSWD reiterates its support on the need to address the challenges of fostering effective and long-lasting volunteerism by ensuring that volunteers are protected, receiving assistance, and that their significant contributions are acknowledged.

For the Chairperson's consideration.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


REX GATCHALIAN

Secretary

Date: JUL 11 2023