

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

15th Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 257

Introduced by Rep. PRYDE HENRY A. TEVES, Rep. GEORGE P. ARNAIZ, Rep.
JOCELYN SY-LIMKAICHONG

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It has been said that the future of our country lies in our children hence it is deem appropriate that the government should invest sufficient resources for their holistic development. Proper nourishment of our school children should be a primordial concern of our government in order to enhance scholastic performance. There is a significant relationship between a child's readiness to learn and how much stimulation a child gets, if the child is not developmentally ready to do so, teaching will be a waste of time and effort. It is said that health and education are the surest ways to climb the socio-economic ladder. But we cannot achieve this vision as long as many of our children are languishing in their homes in hunger instead of eagerly learning in school.

However, it is unfortunate that the Philippines is one of the countries where nutritional deficiencies and health problems hinder children's progress in school. There is a general weak predisposition of students to learn due to their poor health and nutrition and this has a serious implication as they advance in the educational level. Our education system is besieged with educational malaise as reflected in the elementary enrolment profile. This has haunted our education system for the longest time. Department of Education data shows that cohort survival rate of public elementary school pupils is deteriorating every year with a drop out rate of about 32% or even worse in the countryside. Aside from the increasing drop-out rate, our government has to address the mediocre performance of pupils especially in the core disciplines of Science and Mathematics. It is a fact that the performance of our elementary school children is deteriorating with filipino pupils ranking near the bottom among 25 countries surveyed. Indeed there is a need to check the decline in the quality of our education or the damage would be irreversible. It will take several generations before the nation can recover from the consequences of a poorly educated citizenry.

This bill provides for a nationwide school-feeding program, which is intended to address the problem of malnutrition, declining scholastic performance and low cohort survival rate among school children. It is intent of the bill to make this feeding program a community based program to ensure its sustainability.

For the foregoing reasons, passage of the proposed measures is earnestly requested.


PRYDE HENRY A. TEVES
3rd district, Oriental Negros

GEORGE P. ARNAIZ
2nd district, Oriental Negros

JOCELYN SY-LIMKAICHONG
3rd district, Oriental Negros

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

Fifteenth (15th) Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 257

Introduced by Rep. GEORGE P. ARNAIZ, Rep. PRYDE HENRY A. TEVES,
Rep. JOCELYN SY-LIMKAICHONG, Rep. ORLANDO B. FUA

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONWIDE SCHOOL FEEDING
PROGRAM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 "*National School Feeding
Program of the Philippines*".

SECTION 2. **Statement of policy.** It is hereby declared a policy of the State to
promote and strengthen proper nutrition among schoolchildren in order to safeguard
them from ill effects of malnutrition. There is a direct correlation between good
nutrition and propensity of the child to develop into a physically and mentally healthy
individual.

It is also declared a policy of the state to encourage domestic
consumption of agricultural products and other nutritious food in order to effectively
meet the nutritional requirements of children.

SECTION 3. **The Program.** A Nationwide School Feeding Program (referred
to as the Program) is hereby established, where the National Nutrition Council (NNC)
and the Department of Education (DepEd) in coordination with the Department of
Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Agriculture (DA)
shall initiate, maintain and expand a system of rice and legumes supplements to
public elementary school children for a minimum of one-hundred-twenty (120)
feeding days, five (5) times a week. The Program shall be a community-based
undertaking and shall be administered inside the classrooms. The Program likewise
aims to make parents and school pupils aware of the importance of good nutrition, as
well as proper hygiene by providing relevant and user-friendly nutrition information
and education materials.

SECTION 4. Objectives of the Program. The Program shall:

- a) Provide free noon meal to all public elementary school pupils;
- b) Each pupil will be given lunch based on a menu determined by the NNC in coordination with the Department of Education, ensuring that the meal meets the required nutritional level for school pupils;
- c) The school pupils shall eat their ration;
Provided, that if a school child was absent, the school feeding coordinator in each school shall ensure that their share for that day shall be added to their share the next feeding day when they reported back to class;
Provided, further, that only twice the usual serving portion shall be allowed to an absentee school child;
Provided, finally that in case of prolonged absence, the meal shall be given on a staggered basis, doubling their share every feeding day until the school pupil catches up with the others;

SECTION 5. Social Mobilization and Preparation. Orientation-training shall be held among DepEd health and nutrition unit personnel at the regional and division levels, concerned local government representatives, and the parent-teacher associations (PTAs), in order to orient them on the Program's objectives and mechanics and generate support for the Program. An orientation-workshop shall be conducted at the district and school levels for the district and school level heads, concerned local government representatives, and Presidents of the PTAs. The output shall be the school's plan of action containing the roles and responsibilities of the concerned school personnel, LGU representative, and PTA officers. Training and orientation shall be conducted by the DepEd core of trainers, with personnel trained at the school division level being responsible for training the staff at the district, and municipal level; and those trained at the municipal level training the implementers and feeding coordinators at the school level. The feeding coordinator shall conduct the briefing among parents and children, including determining the baseline knowledge of the children and their parents on nutrition through a pre-test and delineating the roles among parents during the duration of the feeding program. Feeding paraphernalia consisting of placemats, table napkin, spoon, fork, bowls, mugs, and drinking glasses should be provided by the pupils.

SECTION 6. Simultaneous Examination. A simultaneous health examination and de-worming of all school pupils shall be done before the start of the feeding program, and shall be conducted by the respective school nurses. Children found with ailments shall be given proper treatment or referred to hospitals. Class Advisers shall note the progress of each pupil for the entire duration of the implementation of this program. There should be a quarterly progress report to be submitted by each school to the Division Superintendent.

SECTION 7. Inter-Departmental Coordination. For the effective implementation of this Act, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, and Department of Interior and Local Government, through various Local Government Units should coordinate with each other in carrying out this feeding program. The role of each agency, among others, shall be:

- a) Department of Agriculture. The Secretary of Agriculture shall provide technical assistance and training to schools in the cultivation and preparation of foods high in complex carbohydrates, high protein, low-fat versions commonly used for the feeding program, to assist the schools in complying with the nutritional requirements prescribed by the NNC in providing appropriate meals to the school pupils.

SECTION 8. Procurement and Storage of Food Supplies. Procurement of the food supplies shall be done by the respective Provincial governments in coordination with the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture. Food requirements should be sourced locally, provided that these are available in the locality.

Provided, that the PTA shall be the direct suppliers of the food requirements. If food requirements cannot be sourced locally, alternative sources from other suppliers shall be made available in coordination with the Department of Agriculture, *Provided further,* that the price of the food supplied shall not exceed 90% of the prevailing market price at the time of sale. The various local government units shall be the conduit of the food supplies in coordination with the local Parent- Teachers-and Community Association (PTCA).

SECTION 9. Utilization of food in abundance or donated. Each school participating under the Program shall insofar as practicable, utilize its Program, foods designated from time to time by the Secretary of Agriculture, as being in abundance, either nationally or in the school area, or foods donated by the private entities with the consent of the DepEd and NNC.

SECTION 10. Participation of the Local Government Unit. Local Government Units where school districts are located shall provide a counterpart fund of at least twenty percent (20%) of the cost incurred for the Program implemented within their jurisdiction.

SECTION 11. Priority Areas. In case of shortage of funds, the implementation of the Program shall first be undertaken in the province where malnutrition rates are most severe, as may be determined by the NNC.

SECTION 12. Appropriations. An initial sum of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000) is hereby appropriated for the first year of implementation of the Program. Thereafter, all appropriations shall be taken from the annual appropriation

of the NNC. *Provided*, that all administrative expenses of the Program shall be taken from the DepEd annual appropriations.

SECTION 13. **Separability Clause.** If any part or section of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the other parts or sections of this Act.

SECTION 14. **Repealing Clause.** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with any provisions of this Act shall be deemed released or modified accordingly

SECTION 14. **Effectivity Clause.** This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,