

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5071

INTRODUCED BY REP. NANCY A. CATAMCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Over the past few decades, we have been immensely overwhelmed with statistics of malnutrition all over the world so much so that a great majority of us has come to accept it as an unfortunate and irreversible situation. However, things have already changed in recent years and technological advances we have been continuously experiencing have created encouraging new opportunities to improve economies and reduce hunger.

In line with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to reduce the proportion of people, most particularly children, who suffer from hunger by the year 2015, as well as provide food security for the country, this law shall provide ample opportunities for schoolchildren to widen their knowledge and to be equipped with the expertise on planting and harvesting of vegetables and other high value crops through the bio-intensive method of gardening. Research shows that a good amount of increase in vegetable intake among children has been attributed to gardening projects, cooking classes, and other creative activities.

It therefore is a primary concern of the State to increase the efficiency of governance to promote optimum nutrition and improve the nutritional status of Filipino school-age children. Their proper nourishment should be a primordial concern of the State so as to enhance academic performance. Owing also to the fact that arable land has reached its maximum, the State plays a crucial role in developing and improving agriculture practices through the practice of bio-intensive gardening, in sustainably managing the forest and natural resources, and in guaranteeing good nutrition for our future generation.

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


NANCY A. CATAMCO
Representative
2nd District, North Cotabato

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING
A BIO-INTENSIVE VEGETABLE GARDEN IN EVERY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY
ALLOCATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established a Bio-Intensive Vegetable Garden in every elementary school and high school in the country.

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to reaffirm the fundamental right of every person to health and to instill health consciousness among them. The State shall also protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Towards this end, the State shall commit itself to eradicate extreme hunger, provide food security for the country, and facilitate key reforms for the advancement of and support to vegetable production and education.

SEC. 3. Construction and Maintenance - The Department of Education (DepEd) is hereby mandated to be the lead agency in the implementation of this Act, to formulate a guideline of requirements and to structure a timetable to ensure that each and every elementary school and high school will utilize and have a its own vegetable garden.

In line with this, the DepEd shall closely coordinate with the Department of Agriculture (DA) for the construction, funding requirements, and any other pertinent matter needed in the proper implementation of this Act. Idle government lands owned by either the national or local government or available land resources shall be considered for growing vegetables and crops.

SEC. 4. *Inclusion of Bio-Intensive Gardening Methods in Academic Curriculum.* – Bio-intensive gardening practices shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for primary and secondary level students of both public and private academic institutions. The Department of Agriculture (DA) is hereby mandated to closely coordinate with the Department of Education (DepEd) to promote and support research activities to expand the knowledge and understanding of such organic agricultural system as an instrument to further improve the production of vegetable and other high value crops.

SEC. 5 *Crop Harvesting and Feeding Program* – In line with existing food programs being implemented by other government agencies, students utilizing such garden shall be provided a regular allotment of nutritious diet from vegetables and other crops harvested.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - The Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Health (DOH) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act within six (6) months from the date of effectivity hereof.

SEC. 7. *Appropriation.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included and incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Agriculture (DA), and Department of Health (DOH) during the year following its enactment. Thereafter, such sums are as necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, executive issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect immediately after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,