

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

OF
HOUSE BILL NO. 6311



Introduced by Representative TEDDY A. CASIÑO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Studies have shown that Filipinos are meat-eaters and have one of the lowest per capita intakes of vegetables in world with only 39 kg.

According to a 2008 study by the Department of Science and Technology – Food and Nutrition Research Institute, the Philippines has a severe double disease burden: childhood malnutrition and adult obesity. A quarter of adult Filipinos are already hypertensive and 7 million are diagnosed with diabetes, making the Philippines one of the world's top ten epicenters of the disease. Each year, 200,000 Filipinos die of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), with heart diseases as the leading cause of death. Long-term health care costs for NCDs are staggering. They also undermine the country's economic development.

The recent position statement by American Dietetic Association recognize that reduced meat consumption decreases the risk of various health problems, stating, "Scientific data suggests positive relationships between a vegetarian diet and reduced risk for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and some types of cancers."

It is estimated that present greenhouse gas (GHG) levels may increase global temperatures by 2 °C above preindustrial levels by 2050. This will result in serious negative impacts to the ecosystems and human welfare. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (UN-FAO) in 2006 revealed that the livestock industry is responsible for at least 7.516 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide per year or 18% of annual worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. In an updated calculation, World Watch Institute in their study "Livestock and Climate Change" declared that the livestock industry and their byproducts actually account for at least 51 percent or 32.564 billion tons of GHG emissions.

According to the UN-FAO document, seventy percent (70%) of global agricultural land is being used for the grazing of animals or for the cultivation of animal feed, and whereas 3 million hectares of forest are cleared yearly for meat consumption. These findings prompted 2007 Nobel laureate Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to campaign for the reduction of their carbon impact by decreasing meat consumption.

Meatless Mondays was developed as nutrition and environmental campaign to address high meat consumption world-wide in 2003. The campaign was launched jointly by John Hopkins and Columbia University Schools of Public Health.

In the US, the Baltimore City Public School system has become the first fully Meatless Monday school system. The schools system has introduced a wide variety of projects to ensure its students eat and learn about healthy, environmentally friendly choices.

In the Philippines, Tarlac State University became the first Meatless Monday-advocating university and together with Sophia School (in Meycauayan, Bulacan) have been implementing Meatless Mondays for the past several months. The results have been encouraging with students and families benefiting from the program.

Those campaigning for "Luntiang Lunes" estimated that if in 2011, each of the 25.7 million student of will practice Meatless Mondays in schools, that is, substituting meat-protein equivalent intake by plant-based foods, in just one year this would have the same beneficial effect on CO₂-emission as taking 94,392 cars off the road or having 12.35 million trees planted and grown for 10 years based on Life Cycle Assessment (LCA).

Targeting children and adolescents for dietary change will have a life-long impact on dietary habits and cardiovascular health than when interventions are done on adults. This underscores the fact that dietary patterns are established and consolidated in childhood and adolescence.

Knowledge or information campaign alone is insufficient to improve vegetable intake among the young people. A required, integrated, institutionalized and sustainable dietary strategy like Meatless Monday in schools would present as a productive and effective instrument.

According to "Luntiang Lunes" founder and neuroscientist Dr. Custer C. Deocaris, as dietary behavior is the most difficult habit to change, most health promotion campaigns fail due to lack of compliance component for setting realistic goals and reinforcements. "Monday" among the days of the week, may possess the greatest potential to serve as tool to bolster long-term campaigns for the following reasons:

- 1) **Recurrence and cyclicity.** Monday is a useful prompt or reminder to encourage subjects to get back on track. As the message and behavior is recurring, it creates stronger brain circuits to encode for healthy habits. Habits are known to form between 18 to 254 days (Lally *et al.*, 2009, *European Journal of Social Psychology*);
- 2) **Monday is planning and anticipation day.** The power of anticipating and planning for a demanding environment occurs on a Monday as manifested by higher stress level as compared to the rest of the days in weeks (Devereux, Rydstedt & Cropley, 2011, *Psychology Report*); and
- 3) **Monday stress may help facilitate habit formation.** The level of and adrenal-cortical activity on Mondays may have particular utility in crystallizing dietary habits as induction of stress helps redirect hippocampal-dependent (cognitive/goal-directed) behavior to a striatum-dependent (habit-memory) system (Schwabe & Wolf, 2009, *Journal of Neuroscience*).

Recognizing the social context of support that will be created to assist our young citizens acquire life-longer healthy dietary habits, it is in this light that this bill seeks to institutionalize Meatless Monday in schools, both private and public.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is sought.

Approved,


TEDDY A. CASINO
Bayan Muna Party-list

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HOUSE BILL NO. 0311

Introduced by Representative TEDDY A. CASIÑO

**AN ACT PROMOTING VEGETABLE INTAKE
IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS BY IMPLEMENTING A
LUNTIANG LUNES (MEATLESS MONDAYS) MOTIVATIONAL PROGRAM**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "Luntiang Lunes Act of 2012"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the responsibility of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* The objectives of the Luntiang Lunes Motivational Campaign are:

1. To encourage consumption of vegetables, particularly indigenous varieties, which is attributed to healthy living;
2. To aid in the campaign to lessen greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change and environmental degradation; and
3. To promote a healthy lifestyle among Filipinos.

SEC. 4. *Meatless Mondays in schools.* The Department of Education (DepEd) shall order public elementary and high schools to only serve plant-based meals in their cafeterias every Monday while implementing an educational campaign on the beneficial role of such diet on health and the environment. Private schools will also be encouraged to do the same. However, no student shall be forced to buy food from the cafeteria. Students have the right to bring packed lunch, regardless of whether it is plant- or meat-based food.

SEC. 5. *Inter-agency committee.* DepEd with the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Science and Technology's Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI), together with non government organizations, such as the Luntiang Lunes Inc. and the Nutritionist-Dietitian's Association of the Philippines, shall form an inter-agency committee to:

2. Develop and design plant-based meals with emphasis on indigenous vegetables available in the region that will meet the Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intakes (RENI) of Filipino children and adolescents;
3. Monitor health and dietary practices of students and households; and
4. Support and develop advocacy and educational programs and materials.

SECTION 6. *Funds for program.* The funds for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the Luntiang Lunes Motivational Program shall be included in the General Appropriations Act under the funds allocated for DepEd and other concerned agencies.

SECTION 7. *Constitutionality.* – Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, rules and regulations, and executive orders contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,