

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 364

Introduced by: **REP. RAUL V. DEL MAR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize the free breakfast program of the Department of Education (DepEd) for day care center, preschool and elementary school children in all public schools in the country. The free breakfast program shall consist of fortified instant noodles or iron-fortified rice or fortified biscuits or any other fortified form to address hunger primarily and malnutrition secondarily. Unlike in the past where it is implemented only for a limited duration and areas for public schools classified as low performing schools or public schools with high prevalence of malnutrition, it shall be implemented in all public schools throughout the whole country since almost all school children enrolled therein come from poor families and suffer from undernourishment and malnourishment affecting their capacity to attain and maintain average academic performance. These children coming to school with practically no breakfast from home cannot be expected to absorb their lessons in school while suffering hunger pangs.

The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) implemented an immediate intervention to address hunger among families through their children enrolled in DepEd supervised public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools in the form of food subsidy for young learners who belong to poor families. A daily ration of one (1) kilo of rice is given to that family of a child for a specific period of time as long as the child goes to school or to the day care center every day.

In terms of malnutrition, the Philippine government is committed to the global call to eradicate malnutrition as stated in the World Declaration on Nutrition and Global Plan of Action for Nutrition adopted during the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) in Rome, Italy on December 1992. This commitment is operationalized with the birth of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) within the context of current development efforts enunciated in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan.

PPAN serve as the springboard or the country's plan for the Philippine government's goal to decrease the prevalence of malnutrition in the country. It integrates the efforts of the national government, local government units (LGU's), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) including community-based NGOs, the business sector, and the international community in assisting target beneficiaries.

PPAN aims to achieve nutrition for all Filipinos and will contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.

There is therefore an urgent need to fine-tune these program of the DepEd and enhance the same by providing a free breakfast program not only to day care centers, preschools but also all public elementary schools in the country.

Hence, approval of the above-mentioned bill is earnestly sought.


RAUL V. DEL MAR

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN IN DAY CARE CENTERS, PRESCHOOLS AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to promote quality education at all levels of the educational system and to promote the physical, moral spiritual and intellectual and social well-being of the youth. Towards this end, the Government shall endeavor to provide the conditions, to enhance the learning process in public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools to attain the highest academic performance level.

SEC. 2. Free Breakfast Program for Day Care, Pre-school and Elementary Pupils. – To improve the academic performance of school children in public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools a free breakfast program shall be made part of public education system. This free breakfast program shall be designed by the Department of Education (DepEd) upon consultation, as far as practicable with Parents-Teacher Association.

SEC. 3. *Integration of Free Breakfast Program.* – To achieve the declared policy of the government, a Free Breakfast Program shall be included as a mandatory and integral part of the activities of all public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools.

SEC. 4. *Funding.* – The amount needed to implement the provisions of this act shall be charged against the allocation of the Department of Education under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, the amount necessary to carry out and maintain a free breakfast program in the public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees and orders or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,