

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4333**

Introduced by Hon. Christopher S. Co and Hon. Rodel M. Batocabe

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to create the Rural Employment Assistance Program for the benefit of qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in the rural areas and appropriating funds therefor.

This proposed measure is patterned after the National Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 which was enacted by the Parliament of India. Under the National Employment Guarantee Act of India, every household whose adult member volunteered to do unskilled manual work is guaranteed employment of not less than one hundred (100) days in every year. Under that same law, if the adult member is not provided with employment within fifteen (15) days from receipt of his application for employment, the adult member shall be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.

The Rural Employment Assistance Program, however, is aimed at providing temporary employment to qualified heads of family or single adult members of poor households who volunteer to do unskilled manual work in rural areas where they reside. The Rural Employment Assistance Program is similar to the Cash for Work Program, one of the sustainable livelihood programs of the DSWD. Under this bill, the program will be implemented by the DSWD in coordination with the local government units (LGUs) for a period of five years. The DSWD will take charge of evaluating the qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households who volunteers to do unskilled manual work for a period of sixty (60) days in a year. The LGUs, on the other hand, will provide the works or activities where the qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households can be employed. The qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households is entitled to a wage rate of not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the prevailing minimum wage set by the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

Suffice it to state, this bill is envisioned to arrest the growing unemployment rate in the country which is the highest in the ASEAN region. But above anything else, it is designed to make our rural poor productive in order to uplift their lives and their families as well as to spur economic growth in their communities.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is highly recommended.

Rep. CHRISTOPHER S. CO

Rep. RODEL M. BATOCABE

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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
“Rural Employment Assistance Act.”

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the declared policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide employment assistance to a qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in rural areas identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

SEC. 3. *Rural Employment Assistance Program.* – For a period of five (5) years after the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD shall implement the Rural Employment Assistance Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, in coordination with local government units. The Program shall provide temporary employment to every qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in rural areas who volunteers to do unskilled manual work for not more than sixty (60) days in every calendar year.

Rural areas refer to barangays which have a population size of less than five thousand (5,000). Barangays which do not have an establishment with one hundred (100) or more employees, or five (5) or more establishments with a minimum of ten (10) employees, or five (5) or more facilities within the two kilometer radius from the barangay hall, are also classified as rural areas.

SEC. 4. *Assessment to Determine Qualification for Availment of Employment Assistance.* – The Social Welfare and Development Officer, in coordination with the local chief executive, shall conduct an assessment of all heads of family or single adult member of poor households in rural areas who volunteer to do unskilled manual work to determine whether the head of family or single adult member qualifies to avail of the employment assistance under the Program.

For purposes of this Act, *poor household* refers to members of

a family related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption and normally residing together and sharing meals together and who are identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the DSWD to be the poorest families in rural areas.

The poor household shall be determined through variables such as ownership of assets, type of housing, educational attainment of household head, livelihood or occupation of head of the family and access to water and sanitation facilities.

SEC. 5. ***Rate of Assistance.*** – Every qualified head of family or single adult member of a poor household in the rural areas who qualified under the Program shall be entitled to receive for each day of work an employment assistance of not less than seventy-five percent of the prevailing minimum wage set by the National Wages and Productivity Commission in the region.

SEC. 6. ***Types of Works and Activities.*** – The local government units (LGUs) shall be responsible for the identification, execution and supervision of the works and activities to be taken up under the Program in their respective areas. The works and activities may be any of the following:

- a. Construction or repair of health stations, hospitals, schools and day care centers;
- b. River dredging;

- c. Embankment, digging and dredging of canals and drainage, irrigation, dams, coastal or shoreline clean-up;
- d. Communal gardening;
- e. Mangrove and tree planting or reforestation;
- f. Communal farm preparation and planting; and
- g. Repair or construction roads and bridges.

SEC. 7. ***Employment Assistance Fund.*** – There is hereby created an Employment Assistance Fund (EAF) which shall be administered by the DSWD. The EAF shall be exclusively for the benefit of the qualified head of family or single adult member of poor household in the rural areas who availed of the Program.

The EAF shall be used to pay the wages of qualified head of family or single adult member of the poor household in rural areas who availed of the Program.

SEC. 8. ***Appropriations.*** – The amount of two billion pesos (P2,000,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated to carry out the mandate of this Act. It shall be utilized in such manner and subject to such conditions and limitations as may be prescribed by the Department of Budget and Management. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Social Works and Development.

SEC. 9. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the Social Welfare and Development shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and Local Government, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,