



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 5125

Introduced by Representative Susan A. Yap

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under the Constitution "the State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure x x x an improved quality of life for all."

To realize this mandate, this bill seeks to address malnutrition and hunger among children by institutionalizing a Free Nutri-Meals Program to be known as the Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program for children in all public elementary schools and high schools.

Among the salient features of the bill are as follows:

1. Initially, school children in the elementary levels including kindergarten in public schools shall be given free nutritious meals under the Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program. Following the K-12 Policy, it shall cover pupils in the Kindergarten and Grades I-VI. On its third year of implementation, the Program shall cover all levels of public elementary schools including kindergarten and Junior High School Level of the K-12 Policy. On its fifth year of implementation, the Program shall cover both elementary and high school levels in the K-12 public education sector.
2. Due to administrative and resources limitations, public schools in areas where severe malnutrition are reported, armed conflict and highly congested shall be prioritized.
3. Private sector support is encouraged through their respective Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities or through simple donations to public schools.
4. A unified body composed of relevant government agencies is created for an integrated approach in the meaningful implementation of the Program.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


SUSAN A. YAP

Representative, 2nd District of Tarlac

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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AN ACT

INSTITUTING A FREE NUTRI-MEALS PROGRAM TO CHILDREN ENROLLED IN ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS INCLUDING KINDERGARTEN AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION SECTOR, PROVIDING FRAMEWORK THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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 “*Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Act of 2014*.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is a declared policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure an improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, it is the objective of this Act to provide a government-united, practical, and feasible approach to address the issue of malnutrition and hunger among school children in public elementary schools including kindergarten and high schools through the institutionalization of the Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program (Free Nutri-Meals for Filipino Children in Public Schools Program as cited in this Act or Program, for brevity).

SEC. 3. *Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program (free Lunch for Filipino Children in Public Schools Program).* – To improve the attendance, nutrition, health and academic performance of school children in public elementary and high schools, a Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program (Free Nutri-Meals for Filipino Children in Public Schools Program) is hereby institutionalized.

The Sustansiya sa Batang Pilipino Program is a nutrition-driven initiative and is a free nutria-meals program for school children enrolled in public schools. The food shall be served at the start of the class for five (5) days a week and to complete the duration of one hundred and twenty (120) feeding days.

The Program shall follow a 5-year full implementation phase. The Program shall be initially implemented in all public elementary schools including kindergarten centers (Kindergarten to Grade VI, following the K-12 Policy).

1 On the third year after the enactment of this Act, the Program shall be implemented in all public
2 elementary schools including kindergarten and in the Junior High School levels following the K-12
3 Policy.

4 On the fifth year of its implementation, its implementation shall be simultaneous in all levels in
5 the elementary and kindergarten and secondary education, covering both Junior and Senior High School
6 Levels.

7 The schools located in areas or local governments where severe malnutrition or where "severely
8 wasted" pupils as defined by existing government guidelines are reported, schools located in areas of
9 armed conflict and schools located in highly congested areas shall be accorded prioritization in the
10 implementation of this Act.

11 SEC. 4. *Child Nutrition Network.* – There is hereby created a Child Nutrition Network (CNN), a
12 body that will implement the Program. It shall be composed of the Department of Education
13 (DepEd), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of
14 Agriculture (DA), the National Nutrition Council (NNC), the Food and Nutrition Research Institute
15 (FNRI) and the Department of Health (DOH). The Secretary of DepEd and the Secretary of DSWD
16 shall be Co-Chairpersons of the CNN.

17 The CNN shall then establish a Nutrition Framework for its implementation. The Nutrition
18 Framework, among others, will serve as blueprint containing the details of its implementation;
19 integrated package of nutrition services; institutionalization of a system of qualification, accreditation
20 and the corresponding incentives for private corporations; development of a data base of information,
21 knowledge and best practices for nutrition programs; food and health aspects of school-based
22 implementation; monitoring progress report on children; participation of communities and civil society
23 and private-public sector partnership.

24 SEC. 5. *Integrated Nutrition Education and Social Preparation.* – The National
25 Lunch Program shall be complemented by public health and nutrition education campaign programs,
26 which aims to promote a holistic and integrated approach to health and nutrition education of school
27 pupils. For this purpose, relevant and user-friendly nutrition information and education materials shall
28 be developed and distributed in the public school. Orientation-training shall be held among DepEd
29 health and nutrition unit personnel at the regional and division levels, concerned local government

representatives, and the parent-teacher association (PTAs), in order to orient them on the Program's objectives and mechanics and generate support for the Program.

SEC. 6. *Periodic Health Examination.* –A simultaneous health examination including relevant vaccination and de-worming of all school pupils shall be undertaken before the start of the feeding program, and shall be conducted by either the respective local Health Officer or Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS). Children found with ailments shall be given proper treatment and referred to hospitals. Class Advisers shall note that the progress of each pupil for the entire duration of the implementation of this program. The respective Principals shall submit a quarterly progress report to the Division Superintendent. The Division Superintendent shall submit the consolidated reports to the Child Nutrition Network.

SEC. 7. *Role of the Department of Education (DepEd).* – The Department of Education shall be responsible for institutionalizing the standard lunch program in the public education system, which will:

- a) Provide free lunch meals to all public elementary and high school children;
- b) Ensure that the standard lunch meals meet the required nutritional level for school pupils, in coordination with the NNC
- c) Institute a system of effective sourcing, procurement and delivery of the required raw materials and other necessary inputs.

SEC. 8. *Role of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).* – The DSWD shall identify the priority areas, in the cities and municipalities where malnutrition rates are most severe, as may be determined by the NNC. For the first two (2) years of the feeding program, the DSWD shall facilitate the piloting of the program in the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) areas.

SEC. 9. *Role of the Department of Agriculture.* –The Department of Agriculture (DA) shall identify and accredit farmers, farmers' organizations or farmer's cooperatives, who can supply good quality fresh fruits, vegetables and other healthy food stuffs.

The DA, as far as practicable, shall identify the farmers and farmers' organizations from the locality where the feeding program is to be administered. The farmers shall be chosen pursuant to a transparent and fair selection system, which the Department of Agriculture shall design, promulgate and implement. The DA shall likewise provide technical assistance in cost-effective vegetable and rice farming within the school premises, whenever applicable. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic

Resources (BFAR) shall provide technical assistance in the development of cost-effective ways raising tilapia, and other fish resources that are available in the locality.

SEC. 10. Role of the Department of Health (DOH) – The DOH shall identify the fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods which are appropriate for the feeding programs in the specified locality and shall recommend these to the DA for purchasing. The DOH shall also procure personnel or volunteers from the locality, preferably from the Parent Teacher Association (PTAs) and provide technical assistance in the training on the proper and healthy preparation, cooking and other healthy practices in relation to the feeding programs.

SEC. 11. Role of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) – The DILG shall implement an effective monitoring system that will be implemented through the Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), and shall institutionalize a fair and progressive system of compensation and incentives for the BNS, which, shall likewise be sourced from the funding of the national feeding program in the public education system. The DILG shall issue memorandum circulars which will institutionalize a subsidized funding scheme for the 5th and 6th class municipalities and a national-local counterparting scheme for 3rd and 4th class municipalities.

SEC. 12. Private Sector Participation. – Private Sector partnership is encouraged in this Act. The private entity can, in the form of their Corporate Social Responsibility, donate or adopt a school as recipient of the Sustansiyang Batang Pilipino Program in cooperation with the concerned agencies identified in this Act or directly organized and coordinated with the DepEd.

For purpose of this provision, the DepEd in coordination with the Department of Finance and other relevant government agencies may provide in a guideline a system of incentives including, but not limited to, creditable expenses in income tax, or discount in business permits registration or other assistance.

SEC. 13. Appropriation. – The amount of Ten Billion (Php 10,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the implementation of this Program and shall be sourced from the proceeds of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Philippine Gaming and Amusements Corporation. Initially, a substantial portion shall be sourced from the Social Fund of the Office of the President.

The funds shall be administered by the Child Nutrition Network (CNN).

Thereafter, such sum necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

1 All expenditures, disbursement of funds and other activities made under the program shall be
2 subject to existing government auditing and accounting rules and regulations.

3 SEC. 14 *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – The Child Nutrition Network (CNN) shall
4 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations implementing the provisions of his government agencies
5 and instrumentalities shall likewise promulgate the necessary internal memoranda, circulars and other
6 order to institutionalize the program within their respective offices, not later than the date determined
7 by the CNN.

8 SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decreed and orders or parts thereof which are contrary
9 to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly. Nothing in this
10 Act shall affect the existing food programs being implemented by other government agencies.

11 SEC. 16 *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete
12 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever
13 comes earlier.

14 Approved,