

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5193**



Introduced by Hon. Delphine Gan Lee and Hon. Orestes T. Salon

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Filipino children are more malnourished than ever.

The Philippine chronic malnutrition rate among children aged 0-2 was at 26.2%, the highest in 10 years, according to a recent survey by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). That report is filed by FNRI on child hunger and malnutrition on April 19, 2016.

Around a third of school children in the Philippines are undernourished, according to the country's Food and Nutrition Research Institute.

And in a country where one in 10 Filipino families lives in extreme poverty, these findings come as no surprise. A recent survey conducted by the charity Save the Children found that one in four Filipino children sometimes skip meals and as many as 1.5 million children often go a whole day without a single meal.

The Philippines Department of Education warns that as many as 1.8 million Filipino children suffer from "severe malnourishment".

Undernutrition is also a problem exacerbated by mothers who give birth when they are too young. "If teenagers get pregnant at a young age and are malnourished they most likely will produce children that are also malnourished," said Lilibeth Dasco, Senior Science Research, Food and Nutrition Research Institute.

According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, children from the ages of 0-10 years old are the most at risk. This has potentially devastating short and long-term effects like stunting.

According to a recent Save the Children report, widespread malnutrition has led to stunted growth among people - and one in three children under the age of five suffers from this condition.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that around the world, nearly half of all deaths in children under 5 are attributable to undernutrition. This translates into the unnecessary loss of about 3 million young lives a year. Undernutrition puts children at greater risk of dying from common infections, increases the frequency and severity of such

infections, and contributes to delayed recovery. In addition, the interaction between undernutrition and infection can create a potentially lethal cycle of worsening illness and deteriorating nutritional status. Poor nutrition in the first 1,000 days of a child's life can also lead to stunted growth, which is irreversible and associated with impaired cognitive ability and reduced school and work performance.

These numbers are based on facts; these numbers represent the dire reality that we as Filipinos and as citizens of this world face. It is high time that we as a nation do our part in order to curb the serious problem that presents itself to us as we ply to and from work every single day in the form of countless children in the street looking for their next meal. With this bill, I hope in no small part to start the ball rolling and become a part of the solution rather than the problem as a member of this humble chamber by creating bills such as this to give attention to a problem that requires every bit of help we can give in order to cut down on malnutrition in all its forms.

The urgent passing of this bill is thus earnestly sought.



DELPHINE GAN-LEE
Sectoral Representative
AGRI Party-List



ORESTES T. SALON
Sectoral Representative
AGRI Party-List

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FREE FOOD FOR CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND DAY CARE
CENTERS FROM PRODUCTS OF FARMERS PURCHASED BY THE GOVERNMENT
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS, "SCHOOL FEEDING PURCHASED FROM SMALL SCALE
PRODUCERS"

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

Section 1. Title. - This act shall be known as the "School Feeding Purchased From Small Scale Producers"

Section 2. Declaration Policy. - It is the policy of the State to feed the children and secure their education. It is also the policy of the State to free the people from poverty by providing a guaranteed market for the products of the farmers, thereby promoting full employment in the agricultural sector, presently the sector with the highest poverty incidence.

Section 3. School Feeding Program. - A school feeding program shall be mandatory in all public day care centers, preschools and elementary schools. As for the public schools mentioned where two (2) batches of students come in the morning and the afternoon, it is hereby declared that 2 sessions of the feeding program is to be created for the equal feeding of all students in all schools. This school feeding program shall be administered by the Secretary of the Department of Education.

School feeding shall be made available free of charge to school children in all public day care centers, preschools, and elementary schools. Feeding shall be done before classes' start, preferably an hour before class starts.

School feeding programs must meet the applicable recommendations of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI). The decisions about what specific food to serve and how they are prepared shall be made by the school authorities, based on guidelines to be issued by the Secretary of the Department of Education.

Section 4. Small-Scale Producers Registry. - The Department of Agriculture (DA) shall keep and regularly update a list of Small-Scale Producers. It shall use Registry for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA), Regional Field Office (RFO) list of beneficiaries for farmers

and update the database to also include livestock breeders, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' National Program for Municipal Fisher folk Registration. (BFAR FishR) for fisher folks and any other list it may deem necessary to keep the registry up to date. *Furthermore*, the DA is required to coordinate with the DSWD to cross-match and compare the registry with the DSWD's National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) to avoid duplication and redundancy.

Section 5. Guaranteed Market for Farmers Fund. – A Guaranteed Market for Farmers Fund shall be established which shall be administered by the Department of Education. Five Billion Pesos (P5,000,000,000.00) shall be appropriated from the National Treasury for this purpose upon the effectivity of this Act. For every succeeding year thereafter, such amount shall be increased by increments of at least Five Billion Pesos (P5,000,000,000.00).

Section 6. Guaranteed Market for Farmers. – Farmers, identified by the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under the National Household Targeting Survey to be living in poverty, shall be given a guarantee that their produce shall be purchased by the government. The maximum amount to be allocated for each farmer shall be determined as to ensure their net income shall not fall below the poverty threshold for their respective localities/regions.

Section 7. Technical Training and Assistance. – The Secretary of the Department of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Health, the Director of the FNRI, and the Director-General/Secretary of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), shall develop a program to provide the food service personnel of public day care centers, preschools, elementary schools with technical training and assistance to prepare healthy meals. The same personnel shall be responsible for securing the produce of the identified farmers from the respective localities.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Secretary of the Department of Health, the Director of the FNRI, and the Director-General/Secretary of the TESDA, and other appropriate government agencies, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. Such rules and regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Section 9. Separability Clause. - Should any provision of this Act be subsequently declared as unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity or the legality of the other provisions.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, other issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

Section 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,