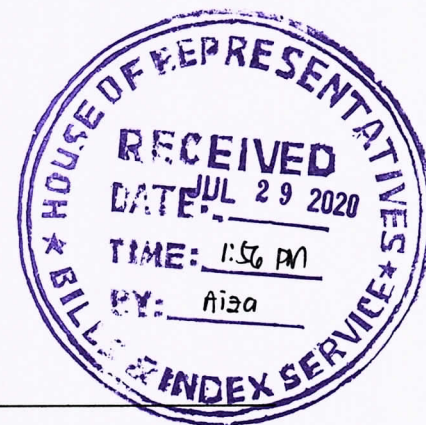


REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session
House Bill No. 7203



Introduced by Representative Maria Lourdes O. Acosta-Alba

EXPLANATORY NOTE

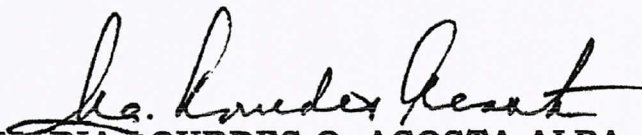
According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the urban population has an annual growth of 4%. This growth could mean that urban areas will be home to more than 50% of Filipinos in the future. However, urban areas also experience high hunger incidence based on the 2019 Survey of the Social Weather Station.

Moreover, urban agriculture will play a big role to ensure food security while we are on community quarantine and while we are fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Households, especially in the urban areas, must be given the opportunity to produce fresh and healthy food from their backyard. This will help them attain food security even after the community quarantine is lifted and COVID-19 defeated. Growing one's own food might be the "new normal" after COVID-19 that is why it is best to promote urban agriculture and educate the people to be able to plant on their own.

To alleviate such problems, the proposed legislation aims to promote and develop Urban Agriculture, which has been proven to address malnutrition, lessen poverty, and improve local economy.

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


MARIA LOURDES O. ACOSTA-ALBA
First District, Bukidnon

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EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
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**AN ACT PROMOTING INSTRUCTIONAL GARDENS IN PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULA AND PROMOTING THE USE OF
URBAN AGRICULTURE IN ALL METROPOLITAN AREAS
NATIONWIDE TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEROF**

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 "*Instructional Gardens and Integrated Urban Agriculture Act of 2020*".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. — The State shall ensure that the fundamental right of every person to adequate food and to be free from hunger is guaranteed and protected. As such, the achievement of self-sufficiency and sustainability in food production is adopted as a primary State policy. Towards this end, the State shall develop climate-resilient communities in the metropolitan areas through the promotion of modern, appropriate, cost-effective, and environmentally safe agriculture technologies to ensure food security, promote a healthy citizenry and an improved quality of life for urban dwellers.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. — As used in this Act:

(a) Food security refers to a situation wherein food is available and affordable at all times, and where all people have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life; agricultural production of food and goods in urban areas;

(b) Instructional Gardens refer to a program of instruction in all elementary and secondary schools, where knowledge and skills, not only in urban agriculture and vertical farming, but in agricultural food production in general, are imparted to school children through relevant theories and actual engagement in agricultural cultivation/production. The theories and actual production shall revolve around the concepts of composting, waste

management techniques, healthy and nutritious farm produce, sustainable farm practices, among others;

(c) Integrated urban agriculture refers to the development paradigm that encompasses principles, management technologies, and the policies relating to the practice and application of agricultural production of food and goods in urban areas; and

(d) Vertical farming refers to the method of farming that is brought to the urban space by employing concepts of indoor agriculture in skyscrapers and other modern buildings.

SEC. 4. Promotion of and Comprehensive Research on Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming. – For purposes of this Act, the respective Secretaries of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) are hereby mandated to promote the use of urban agriculture and vertical farming in the country's urban areas and in other areas in the country where such farming methods are suited, as an intervention mechanism for further addressing food security concerns of the country.

Idle and/or abandoned government lots and buildings owned by either the national government or local governments or available land resources in state universities and colleges shall be considered for growing crops, raising livestock, and producing food using the said methods.

SEC. 5. Institutionalization of Instructional Gardens in School Curricula. – Instructional Gardens program shall be integrated in the academic curricula for elementary and secondary level students of both public and private academic institutions, particularly in subjects in Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics, and/or other related subjects.

The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Department of Agriculture, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Section within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. Participation of Local Government Units. – The local government units (LGUs), shall formulate policies on the practice of urban agriculture and vertical farming, and on utilizing urban spaces, unused spaces, and idle lands, consistent with its existing policy on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and zoning ordinances. The LGUs in cities and urban areas are required to enact local legislation institutionalizing urban agriculture as a regular component in the annual appropriations of the LGUs. LGUs shall also grant necessary incentives to their constituents who actively participate in urban farming activities.

All homeowners' associations, neighborhood associations, community associations, people's organizations, and local business establishments shall be encouraged by the LGU to participate in urban agriculture activities.

SEC. 7. Tax Incentives. – All allocations of grants, endowments, donations, or contributions and technical assistance provided by private individuals or corporations to schools for the promotion and implementation of Institutional Gardens in the school curricula, as certified by the DepEd, shall be exempt from taxes and duties.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. – The funds necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's budget of the Department of Agriculture. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the DA and the Department of Science and Technology, in coordination with the concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary IRR: Provided, That, spaces for urban agriculture shall not be prime lots or areas suitable for investments. The LGUs in cities and urban areas are required to enact local legislation institutionalizing urban necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 11. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved,