

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

7768
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



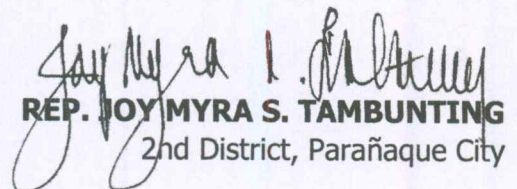
Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Urban agriculture helps achieve food security at the household level. Food security is among the most pressing issues that we face as we continue to struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic. This is important because one way we could protect ourselves from the COVID-19 is being healthy and having a strong immune system. Urban agriculture allows people to cultivate, process and distribute food across their communities. This greatly aids in the provision of fresh and healthy produce to villages and areas that are distant from markets.

This proposed measure seeks to raise public awareness, provide information, and engage the public to participate in Urban Agriculture projects and activities. This measure also aims to integrate urban agriculture to the academic curriculum of students in the secondary and tertiary level. The implementation of this measure shall be spearheaded by the National Agriculture and Fisheries Council together with Local Government Units.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.


REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

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HOUSE BILL NO. 7768

Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

AN ACT
PROMOTING INTEGRATED URBAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ALL
METROPOLITAN AREAS NATIONWIDE TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS
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 “Integrated Urban Agriculture Act”.

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;
- b. 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
- c. 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. Scope. – This Act shall apply to all urban spaces such as idle, government or private lots or buildings, available land resources in state or private universities and colleges suitable for growing crops and raising poultry, livestock and aquaculture.

Sec. 5. National Agriculture and Fisheries Council. – The National Agriculture and Fisheries Council (NAF Council) is hereby mandated to monitor and ensure the proper implementation of this Act. The Council shall be composed of the following members:

- a. Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (Chairperson);
- b. Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management;
- c. Secretary of the Department of Education;
- d. Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- e. Secretary of the Department of Health;
- f. Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government;
- g. Secretary of the Department of Finance;
- h. Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment;
- i. Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways;
- j. Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;
- k. Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- l. Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry;
- m. Secretary of the Department of Transportation;
- n. Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education;
- o. Chairperson of the National Anti-Poverty Commission;
- p. Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority;
- q. Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- r. Chairperson of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor;
- s. Representative from the Academe;
- t. Representative from the private sector who has the expertise in urban agriculture and vertical farming; and
- u. Lead Convenor of the Urban Agriculture Practitioners Network of the Philippines.

Cabinet secretaries who are members of the Council may designate their duly authorized and permanent representatives whose ranks shall in no case be lower than assistant secretary.

Sec. 6. Powers and Functions of the NAF Council. – The NAF Council shall have the following additional powers and functions:

- a. Develop a unified strategy to link agricultural production to nutrition programs;
- b. Conduct policy studies, program monitoring and comprehensive researches on food production, sustainable food systems and the country's urban agriculture agenda;
- c. Ensure that department resources are used to effectively encourage agricultural production in urban communities;
- d. Provide technical assistance in support of vertical farming, backyard food production and community gardening programs consistent with the goals of poverty reduction, food security and healthy eating habits in urban communities; and
- e. Submit periodic reports and policy recommendations to Congress for the proper implementation of this Act.

Sec. 7. Inclusion of Urban Agriculture in the Educational System. – Urban Agriculture shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for elementary, secondary and tertiary level students of both public and private academic institutions offering courses in Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics and/or other subjects related to agriculture. A course curriculum on

gardening shall be developed and included in the regular curriculum of elementary and secondary education. Instructional materials shall likewise be developed.

For universities and colleges, Urban Agriculture shall form part of the required period of time spent by students in the National Service Training Program or the Citizens Military Training. A plan for the utilization or maximization of space occupied by schools shall be formulated specifically for urban agriculture purposes.

Sec. 8. Responsibility of Local Government Units. – The local government units (LGUs), in coordination with the NAF Council shall formulate policies on the practice of Urban Agriculture 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. 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 agriculture as a regular component in the annual appropriations of the LGUs.

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. 9. Information and Education Campaign. – In order to raise public awareness, provide information and engage the public to participate in activities and projects on Urban Agriculture, the NAF Council shall engage the assistance of the Philippine Information Agency, through the Public Information Office in each city and municipality, to undertake a nationwide information campaign.

Sec. 10. 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. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the NAF Council, in coordination with the concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 12. Separability Clause. – 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. 13. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, or regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

Sec. 14. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,