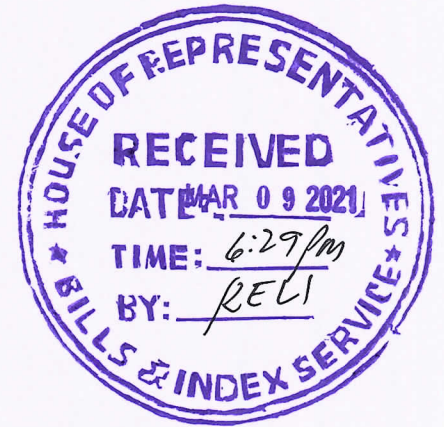


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

House Bill No. 8964



Introduced by Representative ERIC GO YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 11203 or "An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice, and For Other Purposes," which was enacted on March 15, 2019, provides that if the annual tariff revenues from rice importation exceed Ten Billion Pesos (P10,000,000,000.00) in any given year within the six (6) period following the effectivity of this Act, the excess tariff revenues shall be earmarked by Congress and included in the General Appropriations Act (ACT) of the following year:

"(a) Rice Farmer Financial Assistance – A portion of the excess rice tariff revenues shall be released to the DA and shall be used for providing direct financial assistance to rice farmers who are farming two (2) hectares and below regardless of whether they continue farming rice or not as compensation for the projected reduction or loss of farm income arising from the tariffication of the quantitative import restrictions on rice;

"(b) Titling of Agricultural Rice Lands – A portion of the excess rice tariff revenues shall be released to the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Land Registration Authority (LRA). and shall be used for the subdivision and titling of agricultural rice lands or parts thereof awarded to farmer-beneficiaries under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and other similar programs of the government:

"(c) Expanded Crop Insurance Program on Rice – A portion of the excess tariff revenues shall be released to the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) and shall be used for the provision of crop insurance to qualified rice farmer-beneficiaries under « its existing agricultural insurance programs; and

"(d) Crop Diversification Program – A portion of the excess tariff revenues shall be released to the DA and shall be used for productivity-enhancement programs for rice farmers seeking to diversify production towards other crops.

"The Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COCAFAM) shall conduct a periodic review of the use of the Rice Fund."

This bill seeks to authorize the Department of Agriculture (DA) to use the annual tariff revenues in excess of P10 billion, directly remitted from the BOC, for direct cash assistance to farmers owning one (1) hectare or less of rice land until 2024. According to the Bureau of Customs (BOC), they have collected P14.6 billion in revenues from January to November 2020 from the 2.25 million metric tons of rice imports during the 11-month period. This provision of excess collection to our farmers shall provide them with immediate aid and assistance, most especially during these difficult times.

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



ERIC GO YAP

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **8964**

Introduced by Representative ERIC GO YAP

AN ACT

AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO USE THE ANNUAL TARIFF REVENUES IN EXCESS OF P10 BILLION, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11203 OR "AN ACT LIBERALIZING THE IMPORTATION, EXPORTATION AND TRADING OF RICE, LIFTING FOR THE PURPOSE THE QUANTITATIVE IMPORT RESTRICTION ON RICE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES," FOR DIRECT CASH ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS OWNING ONE (1) HECTARE OR LESS OF RICE LAND UNTIL 2024

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Cash Assistance for Filipino Farmers Act of 2020."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby the declared policy of the State to address the plight of small farmers in the country. The State recognizes the urgency of intervening for our farmers in light of the current state of declining palay prices and the crippling effects of the COVID pandemic. Towards this end, the State shall provide monetary assistance to the hardest hit segments of our small farmers in the form of actual giving of cash to farmers.

SEC. 3. Coverage. – This Act shall apply only to farmers owning one (1) hectare or less of rice land. The Department of Agriculture (DA) shall establish actual beneficiaries of this Act on the basis of its Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) for rice.

SEC. 4. Authorization. – The DA is hereby authorized to use the monies from the annual tariff revenues in excess of Ten billion pesos (P10B), as provided in Section 13 of Republic Act No. 11203, for direct provision of cash assistance to farmers. The Bureau of Customs (BOC) is hereby mandated to directly remit to the DA the said excess funds.

Further, any money in excess of Ten billion pesos (P10B) in the annual tariff revenues in any given year in the life of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund

(RCEF) under said Act, shall automatically be given as cash assistance to farmers, unless otherwise amended by law.

The BOC and the DA shall submit separate reports to Congress at year end, through the Committee on Agriculture, on the remittance of funds and the actual fund disbursement for the year, respectively.

SEC. 5. *Funding.* – The source of funds for the annual direct cash assistance to farmers shall be the excess of Ten billion pesos (P10B) in the annual revenue collections under Republic Act No. 11203.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – In case any provision or any part thereof is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared and affected shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent or contrary to the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect immediately following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,