EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)

Second Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 9616

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE VIRGILIO S. LACSON**

Food is the fuel necessary to get through our everyday lives. The calories we get from food provide the energy for our body to function properly and carry out activities. Nonetheless, this basic necessity is not a reality for many families in the Philippines.

A July 2020 survey[1] estimated that about 5.2 million Filipino families experience involuntary hunger due to lack of food to eat. And even before the pandemic, around 95 Filipino children die of malnutrition every day.

Hunger can prevent humans from functioning properly. It inhibits us from performing well in our daily activities. It also tampers with the physical and psychological well-being of people, especially among the youth. Furthermore, it can result to long-term negative effects in their development.

It is a given fact that hungry and sick students can barely focus on their education, let alone attend their classes. In some cases, children miss in-school education for extended periods of time due to hunger and malnutrition.

Studies from the American Psychological Association[2] also show the correlation of hunger and academic performance. Hunger has been observed to cause anxiety, stress, and in some instances, depression among young children. In turn, these psychological effects disturb the affected child's learning and ability to focus.

This Bill seeks to establish a Mandatory Feeding Program for all students under the K to 12 Basic Education Program under the Department of Education. The bill proposes that a minimum of one fortified meal be provided for students on all school days of the academic year.

HON. VIRGILIO S. LACSON

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[1] *World Hunger Facts & Quotes - Rise Against Hunger*. (online] Available at: <https://riseagainsthungerphilippines.org/understanding-hunger/world-hunger-facts/> (Accessed 7 May 2021).
[2] *Apa.org. 2021*. [online] Available at: <https://www.apa.org/advocacy/ socioeconomic-status/hunger.pdf> [Accessed 18 May 2021).

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 9616

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE VIRGILIO S. LACSON**

AN ACT
CREATING A MANDATORY FEEDING PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS FROM KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12, AND ALLOCATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. DECLARATION OF POLICY – The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. Therefore, it is hereby a declared policy of the state to provide social development programs that shall improve the health and nutrition of our youth, especially students in basic education.

SECTION 2. MANDATORY FEEDING PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN THE BASIC PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM -The Department of Education shall implement a school-based feeding program for public-school children from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Provided, that the mandatory feeding program shall be implemented for all school days of the entire academic year. Provided further, that a minimum of one (1) meal per day should be a fortified meal, based on the standards set by the National Nutrition Council, the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, and the Department of Health.

SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 4. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS - The departments and agencies charged, to be led by the Department of Education (DEPED) with carrying out the provisions of this Act, shall within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, formulate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SECTION 5. REPEALING CLAUSE – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE - If, for any reason, any section or provision of This Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation whichever comes earlier.

Approved,