

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 10644



INTRODUCED BY
REP. ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A SOCIAL SAFETY NET CASH ASSISTANCE AND
INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO AID IN MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF THE
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC, ENCOURAGE THE FILIPINO PEOPLE TO GET
VACCINATED, AND COMPLEMENT THE NATIONAL COVID-19
VACCINATION PROGRAM

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has disrupted the daily lives of Filipino families ever since it first arrived in the country last January 2020. Apart from the continuous risks on public health, the unfortunate situation also heavily affected the economy with a lot of business establishments closing down, thousands of Filipinos losing their jobs, and families struggling to make ends meet.

Social safety nets are stop gap measures or urgent mechanisms designed to address the effects of economic shocks, disasters and calamities, on vulnerable sectors in order to provide relief and transition away from poverty. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines, thousands more can be trapped into poverty if social safety nets are not established urgently.

The initial round of assistance that were distributed by the government through its Social Amelioration Program (SAP) was meant to aid the vulnerable sectors adjust on the difficulties set forth by the unfortunate situation. However, after a year of facing this pandemic, a stronger social safety net must be put in place to support multiple marginalized sectors, protect them from poverty, and encourage them to take part in the National COVID-19 Vaccination Program.

This bill seeks to establish the Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program to provide for a stronger social safety net for Filipino families and aid them in mitigating the effects of the coronavirus pandemic while also encouraging them to get inoculated and contribute to the immediate and effective control of the pandemic. This legislation shall be in line with the principles of the stimulus packages of the national government, i.e. the Bayanihan to Heal Act as One and the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act. Additionally, the Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program shall complement the National COVID-19 Vaccination Program by encouraging Filipino families to get vaccinated. This bill shall reflect the resilience of the Filipino family with the perspective of promoting both the economy and public health.

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



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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Ayuda sa Bakuna Act*”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to promote social justice and public health pursuant thereto, provide all its citizens adequate social services and incentive to fight poverty and improve the quality of life for all.

Unfortunate circumstances like the COVID-19 pandemic which continues to affect the daily lives of Filipinos shall be met with stronger social safety nets and public health encouragement to address and mitigate the economic challenges faced by Filipino families.

Social safety nets are stop gap measures or urgent mechanisms designed to address the effects of economic shocks, disasters and calamities, on vulnerable sectors in order to provide relief and transition away from poverty. Towards this end, the State shall provide a social safety net program in the form of adequate funding of an additional cash assistance and incentive program that will complement the National COVID-19 Vaccination Program.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* –

- a) Family – a group of persons usually living together and composed of the head and other persons related to the head by blood, marriage, or adoption. It includes both the nuclear and extended family.
- b) Nuclear Family – composed of a father and mother with unmarried children or parent with children
- c) Extended Family – refers to the household composed of a nuclear family as defined above together with relatives like son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandson, granddaughter, father, mother, and other relatives.

SECTION 4. *Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program.*

– Over and above and separate and distinct from any existing financial assistance or social amelioration measure of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program is hereby created under the DSWD that will hereby provide cash assistance and incentive through the most expeditious, transparent, and simple process to all Filipino families and individuals affected by the pandemic, as enumerated in Section 6 herein.

SECTION 5. *Amount of Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive.* – Each Filipino family shall receive a one-time cash assistance of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (Php 15,000.00); *Provided*, that all of their living and qualified family members are fully-vaccinated under the COVID-19 National Vaccination Program.

SECTION 6. *Priority List of Beneficiaries.* – The following shall be given priority in the distribution of the Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive:

- a) Poorest of the poor;
- b) Senior Citizens;
- c) Persons with Disabilities
- d) Persons with comorbidities;
- e) Other members of the vulnerable sector;
- f) Rest of the Filipino population who have complied with the requirements set forth in Section 5.

SECTION 7. *Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program Hotline, Website, and Mobile Application.* – The DSWD shall establish, maintain, and operate a telephone hotline, website, and a mobile application in order to effectively and efficiently facilitate the roll-out of the Ayuda sa Bakuna Cash Assistance and Incentive Program, answer inquiries, and receive complaints and grievances from the public, and help disseminate information. A separate priority hotline shall also be dedicated for those with

special needs such as but not limited to: Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities, and the like.

SECTION 8. *Sources of Funding.* – The amount necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act shall be sourced from the unprogrammed funds and savings from the 2021 General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual GAA.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall, in coordination with the Local Government and other stakeholders, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, parts or provisions of this Act which are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. *Non-Impairment Clause.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, Implementing Rules and Regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,