

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 668



Introduced by **Representative JOEY SARTE SALCEDA**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR COMPENSATION TO STAY-AT-HOME HOUSEWIVES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In January 2018, about 29.5 million or 40.3 percent of the total population 15 years old and over were not in the labor force. These include housewives, students, persons with disability, and those who have retired from their employment. About 67.5 percent of those not in the labor force were women. The principal reason given by (about 58.2% of) women of working age for being economically inactive, i.e., being outside the labor force, is unpaid care work, whereas for (54.5% of) their men counterparts, “schooling” is the primary reason for being outside the labor force

Under conventional economics, work that is not paid for does not count as productive labor. These include the work of housewives or stay-at-home mothers who take care of their children, who walk them to school and assist them in their school homework, manage very limited family budget, do grocery shopping, plan the menu and cook nutritious yet budget meals, in addition to a lot more miscellaneous chores for their family and their husbands. Sadly, these works are not considered productive. Our society considers stay-at-home mothers to be “doing nothing” because they do not go out to work at a paid job like the husbands. Every work of a housewife can be considered “social reproductive work,” but most could not see this.

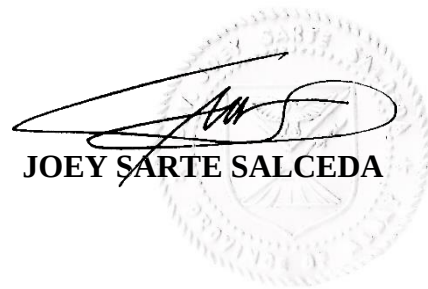
What if these stay-at-home mothers or housewives take out their services as child caretakers, as homemakers, cooks, and sometimes even as care providers for the elderly and the sick in the family, would not husbands be less productive at work, would not children be underperforming in school or worse, may even be juvenile delinquents and pose a threat to society? Clearly, the country’s production processes will grind to a halt.

The State must therefore recognize the work of stay-at-home women, mothers or housewives as valuable economic activity. It is time to appreciate their worth and contribution in nation-building. Yes, it is time to make payment for their housework and give them wages for the work they continue to bear out at home. The homemaker or housewife deserves at least an amount equivalent of a minimum wage, considering that household work is also a full-time job. Some studies show that if we quantify the work of stay-at-home women, it approximates

the work of *kasambahay*, thus housewives also deserve to get paid at least what a *kasambahay* earns. However, to avoid distortions in the labor market and because of fiscal constraints, the State should at the very least provide some social assistance support targeted to stay-at-home women from poor families who care for at least one child aged 12 or below.

Throughout the last three decades, the State has protected women's rights and worked to ensure gender equality with the adoption of several landmark laws that impact on the welfare of women including Republic Act No. 9710 (otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women), Republic Act No. 7192 (or the Women in Development and Nation Building Act), Republic Act No. 10354 (also called the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act), Republic Act No. 10361 (also referred to as the Domestic Workers' Act), among others. International commitments on the Beijing Platform for Action, the ASEAN Socio Cultural Community, the Sustainable Development Goals, coupled with the Philippine Development Plan's focus on inclusive growth, have broadened discussions on the attainment of gender equality and social inclusion to include economic empowerment of women, political participation and leadership of women, as well as violence against women. All these national and international development aspirations have also prompted the country to account for the contribution of unremunerated work of women in the economy.

It is for these foregoing premises that the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



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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 “Housewives Compensation Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to recognize the work at home of stay-at-home mothers or housewives as valuable economic activity. Towards this end, stay-at-home mothers or housewives shall receive financial compensation for all the services rendered on a full-time basis to their children and their families.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* This Act shall apply to all housewives whose family’s economic status falls below the poverty threshold, who work as full-time housewives, and do not have part-time nor home-based work that is compensated.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* As used in this Act:

- a.) “work at home” refers to services rendered for the children in the family but does not include home-based work which is compensated or any income generating activity;
- b.) “stay-at-home mothers” refers to women who, regardless of civil status, perform the work at home of a full-time mother, and do not have part-time nor home-based work that is compensated or any income generating activity;

- c.) “children” refers to those children in the household, whether biological or not, who are ages 0-12, or who possess the mental ability of a child who is below 12 years old and cannot take care of themselves.

SEC. 5. *Compensation.* Financial assistance equivalent to Two Thousand (Php 2,000.00) pesos per month shall be given to housewives who are covered under this Act.

The assistance is subject to a review every three (3) years by Congress, in consultation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). At the onset of implementation, the government will make use of the DSWD National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) database to identify the initial set of beneficiaries. After the first year of implementation, the DSWD, in coordination with the local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO) of each local government unit, will set up mechanisms for annual updating of the NHTS-PR for determining other qualified beneficiaries under this Program

SEC. 6. *Conditionalities.* The financial compensation shall be released by the DSWD, with the support of the concerned local government units (LGUs), as the case may be, subject to the following conditions:

- a) The child or children is/are enrolled in public schools with at least 85 percent attendance;
- b) The child or children manifest responsible behavior in preparation for eventual independence from the full-time services of the mothers; and
- c) The family (father, mother and children) attends a quarterly barangay assembly aimed at empowering the family to become responsible members of their locality, and at reducing the time burden of unpaid care for women living in poverty.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Agency.* The DSWD, together with the concerned LGUs, shall implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD, in consultation with the Secretaries of the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Education shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations, including the targeting and screening of beneficiaries, for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this act is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the concerned DSWD and LGUs in the General Appropriations Act for the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders and proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act, are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,