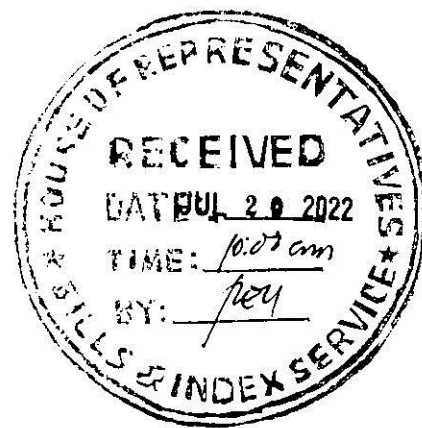


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 2185



Introduced by Representative Ralph G. Recto

**AN ACT
POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG
KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING THE SAVINGS THEREFROM
FOR PRIORITY PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO
ENSURE FOOD SECURITY AND SUFFICIENCY**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This proposed measure seeks to ensure food security and sufficiency by enhancing productivity in the agricultural sector.

The looming global food crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain disruptions, energy crisis, Russia-Ukraine conflict, rising commodity prices and soaring inflation will definitely affect and threaten food security in the country.

Globally, hunger levels remain alarmingly high.¹ In 2021, the figures surpassed all previous records as reported by the Global Report on Food Crises 2022, with close to 193 million people acutely food insecure—nearly 40 million more people than during the previous high reached in 2020.² Conflict and insecurity are identified as the main drivers of increased food insecurity. In addition, World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned that acute food insecurity could worsen in 20 countries or areas during June to September 2022.³

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>

² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>

³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>

The outlook for global acute food insecurity in 2022 is expected to deteriorate further relative to 2021.⁴ In particular, the unfolding war in Ukraine is likely to exacerbate the already severe 2022 acute food insecurity forecasts included in this report, given that the repercussions of the war on global food, energy and fertilizer prices and supplies have not yet been factored into most country-level projection analyses.⁵

In April 2020, the Department of Agriculture (DA) implemented the “*Plant, Plant, Plant Program*” or “*Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS) Laban sa Covid-19*” program to benefit farmers, fishers and consumers.⁶ This P31-Billion program seeks to increase national agri-fishery output through intensified use of quality seeds, appropriate inputs, modern technologies to increase levels of productivity across all commodities, and thus ensure food productivity, availability, accessibility and affordability amidst the threat of COVID-19 pandemic.⁷

In March 2022, the DA launched the P24-Billion “*Plant, Plant, Plant Program Part 2*” to help address the current economic challenges exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine crisis.⁸ These challenges include the disruption of the global supply chain, high logistics costs, high fuel prices, climate change impacts, presence of transboundary diseases, and affected Philippine exports to Russia with the net result of increased food prices driving high food inflation.⁹

The budget allocated for these various programs of the DA may not be enough to increase agricultural productivity. Thus, government must prioritize these programs anew and increase the budget of the agency to address the global and domestic challenges that is expected to accelerate the looming food crisis in the country. However, the current administration is also facing fiscal challenges due to the

⁴ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/global-report-food-crises-2022>

⁵ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/global-report-food-crises-2022>

⁶ <https://www.da.gov.ph/das-plant-plant-plant-program-to-benefit-all-farmers-fishers-consumers-nationwide/>

⁷ <https://www.da.gov.ph/das-plant-plant-plant-program-to-benefit-all-farmers-fishers-consumers-nationwide/>

⁸ <https://www.da.gov.ph/plant-plant-plant-program-part-2-launched/>

⁹ <https://www.da.gov.ph/plant-plant-plant-program-part-2-launched/>

ballooning outstanding debt of the National Government which now stands at P12.50 Trillion as of end-May 2022.¹⁰

With a tight fiscal space, setting the priority programs and projects of the government is very difficult. Therefore, the savings to be generated amounting to P8.4 Billion¹¹ from the postponement of the December 2022 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Elections would significantly contribute in funding the priority programs of the DA to ensure food security and sufficiency for the 109 million¹² Filipinos.

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



RALPH G. RECTO

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¹⁰ https://www.treasury.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/NG-Debt_May2022_web.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/GAA/GAA2022/VolumeI/COMELEC/COMELEC.pdf>

¹² <https://psa.gov.ph/population-and-housing/statistical-tables>

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

1 Section 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No. 9164, as amended, is hereby further
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "SECTION 1. *Date of Election.* – There shall be synchronized barangay
4 and sangguniang kabataan elections, which shall be held on July 15, 2002.
5 Subsequent synchronized barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections shall
6 be held on the last Monday of October 2007 and every three (3) years
7 thereafter: *Provided,* That the barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections
8 on ~~[the second Monday of May 2020 shall be postponed to]~~ December 5, 2022
9 **SHALL BE POSTPONED TO THE SECOND MONDAY OF MAY 2024.**
10 Subsequent synchronized barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections shall
11 be held on the ~~[first Monday of December 2025]~~ **SECOND MONDAY OF MAY**
12 **2027** and every three (3) years thereafter."

13 Sec. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9164, as amended, is hereby further
14 amended to read as follows:

15 "SEC 4. *Assumption of Office.* - The term of office of the barangay and
16 sangguniang kabataan officials elected under this Act shall commence at noon
17 of June 30 next following their election~~[: *Provided, however,* That the term of~~
18 ~~office of the barangay and sangguniang kabataan officials elected in the~~

1 ~~December 5, 2022 elections and subsequently thereafter, shall commence at~~
2 ~~noon of January 1 next following their election]."~~

3 Sec. 3. The Department of Agriculture (DA) shall undertake programs and
4 projects to further enhance its *Plant, Plant, Plant* Program to increase productivity in
5 the agricultural sector, and ensure food security, affordability and sufficiency, such as
6 but not limited to the following:

- 7 (a) Seed and fertilizer subsidies;
- 8 (b) Credit and logistical support;
- 9 (c) Modern farming technology; and
- 10 (d) Farm-to-market roads, irrigation and post-harvest facilities.

11 Sec. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the programs
12 and projects under Section 3 of this Act shall be sourced from the following:

- 13 (a) Unused balance of the appropriations allocated to the December 2022
14 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections under Republic Act No. 11462; and
- 15 (b) Annual appropriations of the DA included in the General Appropriations Act
16 (GAA). Thereafter, the amount necessary to implement the provision of Section 3 of
17 this Act shall be included in the GAA and shall be appropriated under the budget of
18 the DA.

19 Sec. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within thirty (30) days
20 from the effectivity of this Act, the DA and the Department of Budget and Management
21 (DBM) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective
22 implementation.

23 Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is declared
24 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
25 remain in full force and effect.

26 Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, issuances,
27 and rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to and inconsistent with
28 this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

29 Sec. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
30 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
31 circulation.

Approved,