

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4039



Introduced by
Maria Jamina Katherine B. Agarao
Representative
Fourth District, Laguna

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) -Philippines, "Every day, 95 children in the Philippines die from malnutrition. Twenty-seven out of 1,000 Filipino children do not get past their fifth birthday. A third of Filipino children are stunted, or short for their age. Stunting after 2 years of age can be permanent, irreversible and even fatal."¹

At the forefront of the campaign to combat malnutrition are the country's local government units through the Barangay Nutrition Scholars or BNS. In some cases, however, the issue of nutrition is only an annual event – during the National Nutrition Month every March highlighted by local parades and *tiangges*.

In many areas, there are regular feeding programs with the BNS as the main workforce. But these personnel are merely "volunteers" compensated with monthly honoraria without benefits and incentives. As it is, many among them are also malnourished.

This bill aims to provide incentives and benefits to the Barangay Nutrition Scholars. Hence, immediate approval is earnestly sought.


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¹ [Child survival | UNICEF Philippines](#)

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**AN ACT GRANTING BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES TO ACCREDITED
BARANGAY NUTRITION SCHOLARS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

SECTION 1. *Short Title.*— This Act shall be known as the “**Barangay Nutrition Scholars’ Benefits and Incentives Act.**”

SECTION 2. *Statement of Policy.* — As stated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the State shall defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition. Towards this mission, the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) is recognized as the major strategy.

SECTION 3. *Incentives and Benefits.*— In recognition of their services, all accredited barangay nutrition scholars who are actively and regularly performing their duties shall be entitled to the following incentives and benefits:

- a) *Subsistence Allowance.***— Barangay nutrition scholars who rendered service shall be entitled to subsistence allowance equivalent to the meals they take in the course of their duty, which shall be computed in accordance with prevailing circumstances as determined by the local government unit concerned.
- b) *Training, Education and Career Enrichment Programs.***— The DOH, in accordance with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and other concerned government agencies and non-government organizations, shall provide opportunities for the following:
 - 1. educational programs which shall recognize years of service as credits to higher education in institutions with stepladder curricula that will entitle barangay nutrition scholars to upgrade their skills and knowledge for

- community work or to pursue further training as nutritionists or related fields;
2. continuing education, study and exposure tours, training, grants, field immersion, scholarships, etc.; and,
 3. scholarship benefits in the form of tuition fees in state colleges, to be granted to one child of every barangay nutrition scholars who will not be able to take advantage of the above programs.

c) Civil Service Eligibility.— A second grade eligibility shall be granted to barangay nutrition scholars who have rendered five (5) years continuous service; provided, that should the barangay nutrition scholars become a regular employee of the government, the total number of years served as barangay nutrition scholars shall be credited to his/her service in computing retirement benefits.

d) Free Legal Services.— Legal representation and consultation services for barangay nutrition scholars shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's Office in cases of coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against barangay nutrition scholars arising out of or in connection with the performance of their duties as such.

SECTION 4. *Registration.*— In order for barangay nutrition scholars to be entitled to benefits and incentives provided under this Act, they shall register with the local health board in the city or municipality in which they render service. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) in coordination and consultation with the Department of Health (DOH) shall formulate the guidelines relative to the registration of barangay nutrition scholars.

SECTION 5. *Review by the Local Health Board.*— Every incentive or benefit for barangay nutrition scholars requiring the expenditure of local funds shall be reviewed and approved by the local health board to ensure that only the deserving barangay nutrition scholars get the same.

SECTION 6. *Rules and Regulations.*— The Department of Health, in cooperation with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Department of Justice, the Civil Service Commission and other concerned government agencies and non-government organizations, shall formulate within one hundred eighty (180) days from its effectivity, the rules and regulations necessary to implement this Act.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.*— If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder or any provision hereof not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.*— All laws, decrees, executive orders and other presidential issuances which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,