

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 11080



Introduced by Representative **CAMILLE A. VILLAR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State shall protect the rights of subsistence fishermen, especially of local communities, to the preferential use of local marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore. It shall provide support to such fishermen through appropriate technology and research, adequate financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services.¹

Based on the Philippine Statistics Authority, fisherfolk had the highest poverty incidence in 2021 at 30.6%, followed by farmers at 30%, children at 26.4%, and individuals residing in rural areas at 25.7%. "These sectors had the highest proportion of individuals belonging to families with income below the official poverty thresholds compared to the other basic sectors," said the PSA.²

The PSA noted that these are also the sectors with the recorded highest poverty incidences in 2015 and 2018. The PSA said that "significant increases" in the poverty incidence were recorded, the highest being in fisherfolk with an increase of 4.4 percent, followed by children with 2.5 percent, persons aged 15 years and above with disability with 2.5 percent, and individuals residing in urban areas with 2.3 percent.³

A lot of factors have contributed to this condition, such as lean, typhoon or calamities where fisherfolk have limited catch or could not fish altogether. These factors also include declarations of "closed season" by the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) during which the taking of specified fishery species by a specified fishing gear is prohibited in a specified area or areas in Philippine waters, the purpose of which is to prevent overfishing and overexploitation of our marine resources. While this is laudable, a right balance must be considered in order alleviate the condition of our fisherfolk.

¹ Section 7, Article XIII, 1987 Philippine Constitution

² <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1748408/fisherfolk-farmers-rural-communities-poorest-in-2021-psa-data>

³ Ibid

This bill seeks therefore to provide livelihood, financial, medical, and other social protection assistance to eligible beneficiaries to balance various competing interests.

In view of the foregoing, I join my colleagues in Congress in requesting for the immediate passage of this bill.

Camille A. Villar
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AN ACT PROVIDING FOR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR FISHERFOLK WHOSE LIVELIHOOD ARE ADVERSELY AFFECTED DURING PERIODS OF CLOSED SEASONS, AND DURING LEAN, CALAMITIES OR TYPHOON SEASONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Tulong Pangkabuhayan Para Sa Mga Mangingisda Program Act of 2024*”.

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the crucial role of municipal fisherfolk in ensuring the food security of the country. It is hereby declared a policy of the State to provide support to municipal fisherfolk, in recognition of their sacrifices and contributions to the nation, and in pursuit of the Constitutional mandate to promote social justice in all phases of national development.

Section 3. Tulong Pangkabuhayan Para Sa Mga Mangingisda Program. – Pursuant to the declared policy of this Act, there is hereby established a “Tulong Pangkabuhayan Para Sa Mga Mangingisda Program”, herein referred to as the Program, to augment the income of fisherfolk in times of closed seasons for fishing as declared by the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) as well as during calamities, and lean or typhoon seasons. The Program shall provide livelihood, financial, medical, and other social protection assistance to eligible beneficiaries under this Act.

A Tulong Pangkabuhayan voucher worth at least Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00) per month shall be given to each eligible beneficiary for a given period of time. Provided, that the amount shall

be reviewed or revised every year to account for inflation or other factors.

The Program shall be administered by the DA-BFAR, which shall establish an effective, efficient and responsive mechanism that allows eligible fisherfolk timely access to available social protection assistance provided under the Program.

SEC. 4. *Beneficiaries.* – The beneficiaries of this Act shall be municipal fisherfolk who fish within municipal waters, whether coastal or inland, and who use motorized fishing vessels of three (3) gross tons or less: Provided, that registration under the National Program for Municipal Fisherfolk Registration of the DA-BFAR shall be a precondition for the receipt of benefits under this Act.

SEC. 5. *Convergence of Social Services.* –

1. Beneficiaries of this Program shall be automatically enrolled and covered under the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).
2. The Social Security System (SSS) shall craft a micro-insurance mechanism for the beneficiaries of the Program.
3. The local government units (LGUs), through their Local Social Welfare and Development Offices shall cover all indirect costs of accessing the Program including transportation, meals, accommodation or halfway house, among others.
4. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall help defray the necessary expenses to access the Program through its Crisis Intervention Unit. It shall provide protective services or social safety net to fisherfolk through its Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS).
5. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall make emergency employment accessible for eligible beneficiaries under the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD).
6. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is directed to empower eligible beneficiaries under this Act through the provision of relevant livelihood training program.

SEC. 6 *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act, the DA-BFAR, in consultation with relevant government agencies and fisherfolk organizations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letter of instructions, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,