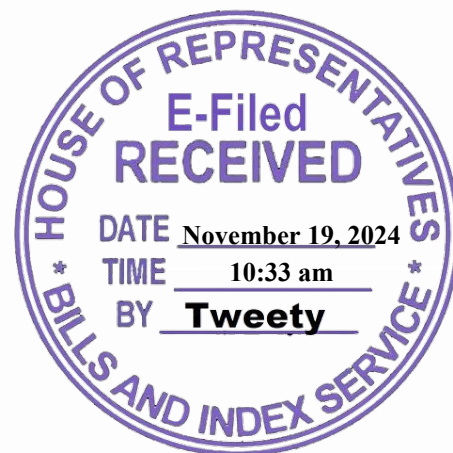


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11102

Introduced by Representative Joseph Gilbert F. Violago



EXPLANATORY NOTE

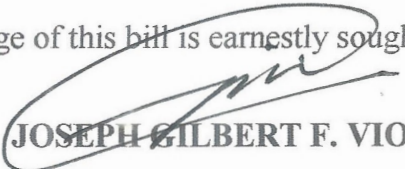
Article II, Section 18 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

As per the latest survey by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the country's unemployment rate fell to 3.7 percent in September 2024 from 4.5 percent in 2023.¹ An estimated 49.9 million Filipinos were employed in September 2024, up by 2.2 million from the same period in 2023, and the underemployment rate increased in September 2024 to 11.9 percent from 10.7 percent in September last year.² While there is a decrease in the unemployment rate, millions of Filipinos still do not have access to job opportunities.

For this reason, this measure seeks to provide employment assistance to qualified head of family or an unmarried, single adult member of qualified poor households in rural areas identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to do unskilled labor for a minimum of forty-five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in a calendar year. Qualified persons under this legislative measure shall receive for each day of work employment assistance equal to the applicable minimum wage set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB).

A similar version of this bill was authored by Rep. Rodel Batocabe and others in the 17th Congress. It was approved in the House of Representatives on Third and Final Reading and was transmitted to the Senate. However, it was not enacted into law due to lack of material time. The present proponent acknowledges the hard work and wisdom of his predecessors.

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


JOSEPH GILBERT F. VIOLAGO

¹ N.a. "Philippines unemployment rate dropped to 3.7% in September 2024". *Manila Standard*. 6 November 2024. Web. < <https://manilastandard.net/business/314519824/philippines-unemployment-rate-dropped-to-3-7-in-september-2024.html> >

² *Ibid*.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11102

Introduced by Representative Joseph Gilbert F. Violago

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF

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 “Rural Employment Assistance Act of 2024.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is declared policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide employment assistance to qualified head of family or an unmarried, single adult member of qualified poor households in rural areas identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

SECTION 3. *Rural Employment Assistance Program.* – There is hereby created a Rural Employment Assistance Program (REAP), which shall provide temporary employment to every qualified head of a family or single adult member of a poor family in rural areas who volunteers to do unskilled labor for a minimum of forty-five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in a calendar year.

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

- a. *Poor* refers to individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the government or those who cannot afford to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life in a sustained manner or those who have been identified as poor by NHTS-PR;
- b. *Rural area* refers to a barangay with at least fifty percent (50%) land area devoted to agriculture, timberland, forest and/or pasture land as determined by the

Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) of the concerned local government unit (LGU); and

- c. *Unskilled labor* refers to a segment of the workforce associated with a limited skill set or minimal economic value for the work performed. It is generally characterized by a lower educational attainment, such as a high school diploma, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or lack thereof, and typically results in lower wages.

SECTION 5. *Qualifications for Availment of Employment Assistance.* – The DSWD, in close coordination with the LGUs and other concerned government agencies, shall conduct an assessment of all poor individuals and families in rural areas who signify interest to do unskilled labor to determine their eligibility to avail of the services and benefits under the REAP.

Employment activities for this purpose shall be designed to mobilize eligible individuals and families to finish a project in a given period. These projects may include the following:

- a. Development, rebuilding/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets destroyed or lost due to natural disasters such as desilting of irrigation canals, development of paddy dikes and rehabilitation of water impounding dams;
- b. Development or rehabilitation of common service facilities, which are being shared and used by poor families as production or consolidation centers such as postharvest facilities, and public markets;
- c. Development or rehabilitation of physical assets to open up access to natural assets where the former is necessary to bring the products of poor families to the market such as farm-to-market roads and bridges; and
- d. Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures such as mangrove plating, rehabilitation and tree planting and similar activities.

SECTION 6. *Rate of Assistance.* – Every person qualified under this Program shall be entitled to receive for each day of work employment assistance equal to the applicable minimum wage set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB).

SECTION 7. *Appropriation.* – The Secretary of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall include in the DSWD's programs the implementation of this Act, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DSWD. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

In addition, the DSWD may accept donations, contributions or grants from various sources for the implementation of the REAP.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after

the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Department of Interior and Local Government, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* — If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, memorandum orders, memorandum circulars, administrative orders, ordinances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,