



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2229**



Introduced by **Hon. Charisse Anne C. Hernandez**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Presidential Decree No. 1569, titled "Strengthening the Barangay Nutrition Program by Providing for a Barangay Nutrition Scholar in Every Barangay, Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes," established the Barangay Nutrition Scholars Program (BNSP). The BNSP aims to address the lack of accessible health services and awareness of good nutrition in remote barangays by appointing a barangay nutrition scholar who will be in charge of providing fundamental nutrition and health services.

The establishment of the BNSP has led to a noteworthy improvement in the nutrition and health within the community, resulting in a decline in malnutrition rates in our country. The commendable efforts of our diligent barangay nutrition scholars, who travel through challenging terrains and hazardous sea routes to reach remote barangays and carry out their responsibilities, are primarily responsible for this achievement. They are leading the battle against malnutrition and the lack of health education at the forefront.

This bill seeks to create the Magna Carta of Barangay Nutrition Scholars. During the Sixteenth Congress, a bill was filed by former Rep. Giorgidi B. Aggabao of the Fourth Legislative District of Isabela, which sought to create the "Magna Carta of Barangay Nutrition Scholars." A similar bill was also filed twice during the Seventeenth Congress, and by Rep. Sharon S. Garin in the Eighteenth Congress.

We should acknowledge and appreciate the crucial contribution of our barangay nutrition scholars, who work diligently to combat malnutrition and enhance health education. It is appropriate that they receive adequate allowances, benefits, incentives, and job security that reflect the level of effort they put in.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charisse', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CHARISSE ANNE C. HERNANDEZ
Representative
Lone District, Calamba City



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2229**

Introduced by **Hon. Charisse Anne C. Hernandez**

AN ACT
CREATING THE MAGNA CARTA OF BARANGAY NUTRITION SCHOLARS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "*Magna Carta of Barangay Nutrition Scholars.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State adopts the Barangay Nutrition Scholar Program as a human resource development strategy of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, which involves the training, deployment and supervision of barangay nutrition scholars (BNS) as originally mandated under Presidential Decree No. 1569, entitled, "Strengthening the Barangay Nutrition Program by Providing for a Barangay Nutrition Scholar in Every Barangay, Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes." Towards this end, the State shall provide additional

incentives, benefits and other forms of assistance to encourage more qualified and trained individuals to join the ranks of barangay nutrition scholars.

SEC. 3. *Qualifications.*- For purposes of this Act, a "barangay nutrition scholar" (BNS) refers to a trained community worker who links the community with service providers, and with the following qualifications:

1. Bonafide resident of the barangay for at least one (1) year, with ability to speak the dialect;
2. Possesses leadership potentials, initiative, willingness to serve the barangay for at least one (1) year, and readiness to learn and teach what has been learned to the barangay people;
3. At least a high school graduate;
4. Physically and mentally fit; and
5. At least eighteen (18) years old but not more than sixty (60) years old.

SEC. 4. *Discrimination.*- The BNS shall not in any way be discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, and political affiliation.

SEC. 5. *Barangay Nutrition Committee.*- The BNS shall assist the barangay captain in organizing or reactivating the barangay nutrition committee and the barangay network ni training purok leaders to assist the BNS.

The BNS shall also organize the community into networks of twenty to twenty-five households, or into community-based organizations working for the 3 improvement of their nutrition situation.

SEC. 6. *Community Weight Survey.*- The BNS shall identify and locate underweight children through a community survey. This survey involves the weighing of al pre-schoolers and interviewing mothers to determine how the child is cared for and the resources available in the family for their participation in nutrition and related interventions.

Based on the results of the annual weighing, the BNS shall, on a monthly interval, weigh all underweight and severely underweight pre-schoolers, all zero to twenty-four month old children, and conduct a quarterly follow-up weighing of twenty-five to seventy-one month old children.

The regular weighing provides the basis for corrective actions which may include implementation of nutrition programs or referral to the appropriate service.

If there are other barangay-based development workers who can deliver nutrition services to the community, the BNS may serve as a linkage-builder. The BNS shall ensure that members of the community, especially those with underweight children, are able to avail themselves of nutrition and related services. The BNS must at all times be aware of the services available, be able to identify those who need these services, and establish a system of linking nutrition and those services.

SEC. 7. *Records and Work Plans.* -To help other barangay workers and the local officials, the BNS shall keep a record of the results of the regular weighing, and the nutrition and health profile of families in the barangay.

The BNS shall also formulate a BNS action plan as a guide in managing the different assigned tasks.

The BNS shall also facilitate the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and coordination of the barangay plan of action for nutrition.

SEC. 8. *Basic Training Program.* - The BNS shall undergo a ten-day training on identifying, monitoring, and referring the malnourished to appropriate service providers.

Aside from the ten-day training, the BNS shall also undergo a twenty-day practicum to learn the proper weighing technique of pre-schoolers and conducting interviews of mothers on child-rearing matters. During this phase, the BNS shall collect and analyze data on the barangay nutrition situation using the family and barangay profile forms, and come up with the appropriate action plan.

The BNS trainer-supervisor or the district nutrition program coordinator (DNPC) and the city nutrition program coordinator (CNPC) shall organize, conduct, and supervise the training. In the absence of the DNPC or the CNPC, the nutrition action officer (NAO) shall assume these responsibilities.

SEC. 9. *Other Forms of Assistance.* - In assisting in the delivery of nutrition and related services, the BNS shall perform the following functions:

- A. Organize the mothers to form a class;
- B. Conduct community nutrition education;
- C. Visit homes to provide nutrition counseling services especially on exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding;
- D. Manage community-based feeding programs;
- E. Distribute seeds, seedlings and small animals from the local agriculture office and other government organizations to promote home or community food gardens; and
- F. Inform the community of scheduled immunization and other health activities in coordination with the local midwife, agriculture officer, social welfare officer, and other government workers.

SEC. 10. *Continuing Education and Training.* - The National Nutrition Council shall provide continuing education through trainings, conduct regular evaluation of the system, and provide technical assistance to the BNS federation to ensure their functionality.

To reinforce skills during the formal training, the BNS shall attend monthly trainings conducted by the DNPC, the CNPC, or the NAO. Regular visits and monitoring may also be conducted by the DNPC, the CNPC, or the NAO to ensure continuous learning.

SEC. 11. *Incentives and Benefits.*- The BNS shall enjoy the following incentives and benefits:

- A. A civil service eligibility equivalent to second grade after the completion of at least two (2) years of continuous and satisfactory service in the barangay. The BNS may avail of this second grade civil service eligibility by filing the proper application with the regional office of the Civil Service Commission;
- B. *Monthly Honoraria* in the amount of not less than Three thousand pesos (P3,000.00), subject to adjustment based on the prevailing market value;

- C. *Transportation Allowance* of not less than One thousand pesos (P1,000.00) per month, subject to auditing rules and regulations, on the condition that the availment of transportation services are in line with the performance of the BHW's official duties and responsibilities;
- D. A monthly hazard pay of at least One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00);
- E. Similar benefits accorded to regular government employees such as PhilHealth, Pag-ibig and benefits under the indigent program of the local government unit; and
- F. An opportunity to avail of a scholarship grant in any institution offering a two-year course formulated by the National Nutrition Council in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

A BNS aged fifty (50) years old and above, has the option to assign the scholarship grant to any offspring.

SEC. 12. *Security of Tenure.* - After undergoing the basic training program provided in Section 8 of this Act, the BNS shall serve for at least three (3) years. A yearly evaluation must be conducted and a satisfactory rating for two (2) consecutive years is necessary before a BNS may be given a permanent position.

The BNS must be a member of the BNS federation that is duly registered with the government and thereby accredited by the National Nutrition Council.

SEC. 13. *Conduct.*- While in the service, a BNS must at all times maintain good moral conduct, be free from political activities, and must not be involved in any criminal or administrative case. The BNS has the right to organize but shall maintain political neutrality at all times. Any violation under this section may be a ground for dismissal.

SEC. 14. *Working Hours.*- The BNS shall render at least eight (8) hours of work a day from Mondays to Fridays, and remain on-call during Saturdays and Sundays.

SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* -Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall, in cooperation with the National Nutrition Council and the national federation of barangay Nutrition Scholars, formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 16. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the current year's appropriation of the Department of Health. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriation Act.

SEC. 17. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder of the provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 18. *Repealing Clause.*- All laws, decrees, executive orders, and other presidential issuances which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,