

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2425



Introduced by **HON. JANETTE L. GARIN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish a free breakfast program for all public school students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, to be known as the "*Libreng Almusal Para Sa Batang Pilipino Program*," and appropriate funds therefor.

Section 13, Article II of the 1987 Constitution states in part that:

"Section 13. The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. xxx."

In 2009, the "*Healthy Start Feeding Program*" of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) was launched to provide supplemental food to day care children aged three to five years old in the form of hot meals, which were served during breakfast or afternoon session break.

In 2018, the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP), which now includes the previous Healthy Start Feeding Program of the DSWD was institutionalized through Republic Act (RA) No. 11037 otherwise known as the "*Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act*." The SFP provides fortified meals and fresh milk or fresh milk-based products to children beneficiaries. In 2024, the DSWD reported that the SFP was able to feed 2,002,473 children beneficiaries and in the five years of its implementation from calendar year 2020 to 2024, 74.07% of these children exhibited improvements in their nutritional status.

In 2023 and 2024, the number of student-beneficiaries under the School-Based Feeding Program of the Department of Education were 2,071,561 and 2,009,279, respectively. These beneficiaries were students whose nutritional status was classified as severely wasted or wasted compared to their peers.

The State has been consistent with its efforts to improve the access of Filipino children to quality education, but hunger and malnutrition remain as persistent barriers to effective learning among them. Studies have consistently shown that nutrition has direct impact on the academic performance of students. In a study published by Maria Rachelle O. Zubianga in 2024, she said that "*education is dictated by nutrition*" and adequate nutrition is necessary for children to become fit and responsible adults capable of fulfilling responsibilities in school.

This proposed measure, "*Libreng Almusal para sa Batang Pilipino Program*," will complement the existing feeding program under RA 11037 that only supports undernourished children in daycare, kindergarten and elementary schools. Without

any condition or criteria, the *"Libreng Almusal para sa Batang Pilipino Program"* will provide nutritious breakfast to all public school children, including students in the junior and senior high schools.

This proposal seeks to combat hunger and malnutrition among students in all public schools by ensuring access to nutritious, locally sourced meals. It aims to improve academic performance, instill healthy eating habits, and promote nutrition awareness from a young age. At the same time, it supports inclusive economic growth by engaging local farmers, fisherfolk, and food producers through community-based sourcing—creating a sustainable link between nutrition, education, and livelihood.

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


JANETTE L. GARIN

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM FOR ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL
STUDENTS FROM KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12, TO BE KNOWN AS THE
***"LIBRENG ALMUSAL PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO PROGRAM,"* 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 *"Libreng Almusal para sa Batang Pilipino Program."*

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to promote the health, nutrition, and educational performance of Filipino children by ensuring that all students in public schools have access to nutritious meals at the start of the school day for their nutritional well-being and cognitive development.

The State recognizes that hunger and poor nutrition contribute to poor academic performance, decreased cognitive function, reduced attention span, and lowered participation in class that hinder literacy development and educational outcomes.

The State affirms its commitment to address the challenges of hunger and poor nutrition through a whole-of-nation approach by supporting not only Filipino children but also the local economy. To this end, the program shall prioritize the sourcing of food requirements from Filipino farmers and fisherfolk in the locality to promote rural

development, job creation, and sustainable livelihoods in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.

Section 3. Libreng Almusal Para Sa Batang Pilipino Program. The "*Libreng Almusal para sa Batang Pilipino Program*," hereinafter referred to as the "*Program*," is established to provide a nutritious breakfast to all public school children from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Section 4. Program Implementation. The Department of Education (DepEd) shall, in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Agriculture (DA), National Nutrition Council (NNC), and local government units (LGUs), implement the Program and ensure that:

- (a) Nutritious breakfast meals are provided to all students before the start of the school day;
- (b) Standardized menus must be prepared according to the caloric, micronutrient, and food safety standards as prescribed by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) and the NNC; and
- (c) Food supplies shall be primarily sourced from local agricultural and fisheries sectors to support Filipino farmers and fisherfolk.

Section 5. Community Participation. The LGUs shall assist in the efficient and effective implementation of the Program. The DepEd shall encourage the active participation from the private sector, including the parents, private corporations, non-government organizations, and other groups, both foreign and local. Likewise, the DepEd shall, through the DA, coordinate with the accredited farmers and fisherfolk cooperatives and civil society organizations for their active involvement in the implementation of the Program.

Section 6. Appropriations. The funds necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) under the respective budgets of the implementing agencies. Further, the

implementing agencies are authorized to seek and receive donations, and other forms of assistance from local and international sources: *Provided*, That donations made to the government agencies, including LGUs, for the implementation of the Program are exempt from donor's tax.

Section 7. Monitoring and Evaluation. The DepEd, in coordination with the NNC and other implementing agencies, shall submit an annual report to the Office of the President and both Houses of Congress on the implementation and budget utilization of the Program.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, National Nutrition Council, and the local government units shall, in consultation with other relevant government agencies, jointly promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended 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,