

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. **3148**



Introduced by HON. LINABELLE RUTH R. VILLARICA
4th DISTRICT, BULACAN

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SYSTEM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State must promote and ensure the inclusive growth of the Philippine economy by spreading wealth and opportunity throughout the country. Government policies and programs should be in place to sustain the gains of a healthy economy beyond urban hubs and cities. Within the purview of this inclusivity are the rural areas where job opportunities can be improved.

Presently, however, more than half of the Philippine's 113 million people live in rural areas, and 36% of them are poor, dependent on agriculture as their primary and often only source of income as reported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development. The establishment of a Rural Employment Assistance System will provide temporary employment to every head of family or single adult member of poor families, including senior citizens, in rural areas who volunteer/s to do unskilled manual work for a minimum of 45 days but not more than 90 days in a year. The system will help address unemployment and jump start agricultural and infrastructure development in the rural areas.

The National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in coordination with the local government unit concerned are specifically mandated to implement the provisions of the proposed law.

Approval of this bill is earnestly requested.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Villarica", written in a cursive style.

REP. LINABELLE RUTH R. VILLARICA

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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 System Act”.

SEC. 2 *Declaration of Policy.* – It is declared the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence 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 a qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in rural areas as identifies by the National household Targeting System Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Services of the Department Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

SEC. 3 *Rural Employment Assistance System.* – There is hereby created a Rural Employment Assistance System, herein after referred to as the System, in coordination with the local government units. The System shall provide temporary employment to every head of family or single adult member of poor families in rural areas who volunteer/s to do unskilled manual work for a minimum of forty-five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in every calendar year: *Provided*, That qualified individuals may include sub-professionals and senior citizens as defined under R.A. No. 9994, or the Expanded Senior Citizen Act of 2010.

Rural areas are barangays that have a population size of less than two thousand five hundred (2,500). Barangays which do not have an establishment with twenty five (25) or more employees, or five (5) or more establishments with a minimum of ten (10) employees, or five (5) or more facilities within the two-kilometer radius from the barangay hall, are also classified as rural areas.

SEC. 4. *Qualification for Availment of Employment Assistance.* – The Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDOs), in coordination with other government agencies concerned, shall conduct a preliminary joint assessment of all poor individuals in rural areas who signified interest to perform unskilled labor to determine eligibility in availing of the employment assistance system.

For purpose of this Act, the poor shall refer to individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot provide their minimum basic need of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life or those who have been identified as poor by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR).

SEC. 5. *Rate of Assistance.* – Every qualified head of family or single adult member of identification and monitoring of the works and activities of the rural employment assistance system shall be lead by the DSWD in coordination with the LGUs and other pertinent government agencies. Eligible poor individuals and families will be mobilized to finish a project in a given period. These projects may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a.) Development, re-building/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets destroyed or lost due to natural disasters;
- b.) Rehabilitation or development of common service facilities, which are being shared and used by poor families as production of consolidation centers;
- c.) Development or rehabilitation of physical assets to open up access to natural assets where the former is necessary to bring out the products of poor families to the market; and
- d.) Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures.

The DSWD shall provide an updated list of projects that may be undertaken as well as the projects not covered under this Act. This list be readily made available to potentially qualified individuals who have expressed their desire to participate in the System.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of the rural employment assistance system shall be included in the budget of the DSWD in the annual general appropriation act.

The DSWD may also secure funds, donations and other forms of financial support from foreign and local person, institutions and governments for the implementation of the rural employment assistance system.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulation.* – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provision hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which

are contrary to or inconsistent with any two of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 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,