

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5236



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" A. CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Nutrition, more than any other social determinant, shapes not only bodies but futures. It is the quiet but indispensable foundation of national development that fuels learning, strengthens immunity, and sustains productivity.

Republic Act No. 11037, or the *Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act*, was a landmark legislation in combating hunger and malnutrition among Filipino learners. Since its enactment, however, persistent undernutrition, hidden hunger, and the rising costs of basic food commodities have shown that feeding programs must evolve from acts of relief into systems of resilience. While gains have been made in school-based feeding, the gap between feeding and nourishing remains.

This measure strengthens the National Nutrition Program by expanding its reach and deepening its purpose. It integrates early childhood care, adolescent health, and local agriculture into one coherent national framework to ensure that every meal served contributes meaningfully to the growth, health, and learning capacity of every Filipino child. The bill institutionalizes direct procurement from local farmers and fisherfolk to strengthen rural livelihoods, establishes central kitchens to improve efficiency and food safety, and sustains the inclusion of milk and micronutrient supplementation to address anemia and other deficiencies.

In fortifying our nutrition program, we not only fill plates, but more importantly, we fill the promise of a stronger, healthier Republic.

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


AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" AGUILAR CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan



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Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA “AGAY” A. CRUZ**

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL NUTRITION PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11037, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“MASUSTANSYANG PAGKAIN PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO ACT”,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **Section 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as
2 follows:

3
4 “Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act, the following
5 terms shall be understood to mean as follows, to wit:

6
7 **(A) ADOLESCENT REFERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE**
8 **AGE OF TEN (10) TO NINETEEN (19) YEARS, WHO ARE IN**
9 **TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD.**

10
11 ~~[(a)]~~ **(B)** Cycle Menu refers to standardized menus prepared by the
12 national government agencies (NGAs), in coordination with the National
13 Nutrition Council (NNC), ~~[and the]~~ Food and Nutrition Research Institute
14 (FNRI), **AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUS) FOR DAY CARE**
15 **CENTERS**, which shall be contextualized and drawn up, among others,
16 according to age range, location and/or type of school, and local cultural
17 and/or religions eating preferences: *Provided*, That such menus shall have
18 as many varieties and selections as may be necessary taking into account
19 ~~[its]~~ **THE** availability **OF FOOD** in the place or locality where the day care
20 center or school is located;

21
22 ~~[(b)]~~ **(C)** **EARLY CHILDHOOD REFERS TO THE PERIOD FROM**
23 **BIRTH TO THE AGE OF EIGHT (8), REPRESENTING A CONNECTED**

1 **AND PROGRESSIVE SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT;**

2
3 [(e)] **(D)** Fortified Meal refers to a **HOT** meal with deliberately
4 increased content of essential micronutrients so as to improve the
5 nutritional quality of the food and provide the level of calories and protein
6 as prescribed by the NNC which shall consist of at least one-third (1/3) of
7 the daily requirement based on the Philippine Dietary Reference Intake
8 (PDRI) **OR NUTRITIOUS FOOD PRODUCTS (NFP) DEVELOPED BY**
9 **FNRI;**

10
11 [(d)] **(E)** x x x;

12
13 [(e)] **(F) MILK-BASED SUBSTITUTE REFERS TO A PRODUCT**
14 **THAT HAS UNDERGONE PROCESSING TO EXTEND SHELF LIFE,**
15 **WHILE RETAINING THE ESSENTIAL NUTRITIONAL PROPERTIES**
16 **OF MILK. THESE INCLUDE, AMONG OTHERS, STERILIZED MILK**
17 **AND POWDERED MILK.**

18
19 [(f)] **(G)** x x x;

20
21 [(g)] **(H)** Undernourished Child refers to a child who has been
22 supplied with less than the minimum amount of [~~foods~~] **FOOD** essential
23 for sound health and growth. For purposes of this Act, it shall include
24 children who are suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition as well
25 as those who are considered as wasted, severely wasted, or stunted under
26 the World Health Organization Child Growth;

27
28 **Section 2.** Section 4 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

29
30 “Sec. 4. National [~~Feeding~~] **NUTRITION** Program. - The National
31 [~~Feeding~~] **NUTRITION** Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, is
32 hereby established to address undernutrition among Filipino children.

33
34 The program shall have the following components and coverage:

35
36 (a) Supplemental Feeding Program for [~~Day-Care-Children~~] **EARLY**
37 **CHILDHOOD CARE.** - The DSWD, in coordination with the LGUs
38 concerned, shall implement a supplemental feeding program for
39 undernourished children with ages [~~three-(3)~~] **TWO (2)** to five (5) years.

40
41 The Program shall be administered in day care centers or in any
42 other facility which can be used for such purpose: Provided, That the
43 Program shall include the provision of at least one (1) fortified **HOT** meal
44 for a period of one hundred [~~twenty-(120)~~] **SIXTY (160)** days in a year:

1 *Provided, further, That in the preparation of fortified HOT meals, the*
2 *DSWD shall work in collaboration with recognized parents' organization.*
3

4 **THE DSWD, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NATIONAL**
5 **NUTRITION COUNCIL (NNC) AND THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE**
6 **AND DEVELOPMENT (ECCD) COUNCIL, SHALL STRENGTHEN**
7 **THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION**
8 **COMPONENTS OF THE PARENT EFFECTIVENESS SERVICE**
9 **PROGRAM, ESPECIALLY FOR THE FAMILIES OF THE TARGET**
10 **BENEFICIARIES.**
11

12 **THE DSWD SHALL COLLABORATE CLOSELY WITH THE**
13 **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) AND THE LGUS IN PROVIDING**
14 **HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES TO UNDERNOURISHED**
15 **CHILDREN BELOW TWO (2) YEARS OF AGE. THE ECCD COUNCIL**
16 **SHALL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN ENSURING**
17 **DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS ARE**
18 **INTEGRATED WITH NUTRITION SERVICES.**
19

20 (b) School-Based Feeding Program. - The DepEd shall implement a
21 [s]School-[b]Based [f]Feeding [p]Program **WHICH SHALL COVER:** [~~for~~
22 ~~undernourished public school children from kindergarten to grade six (6):~~]

23 **(1) UNIVERSAL FEEDING FOR ALL LEARNERS FROM**
24 **KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3, REGARDLESS OF NUTRITIONAL**
25 **STATUS; AND (2) TARGETED FEEDING FOR ALL**
26 **UNDERNOURISHED LEARNERS FROM GRADES 4 TO 6: *Provided,***
27 ***That the Program shall include the provision of least one (1) fortified HOT***
28 ***meal to [all-undernourished] THE COVERED public elementary school***
29 ***children for a period of not less than one hundred [twenty (20)] SIXTY***
30 ***(160) days in a year[.]: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT SUBJECT TO***
31 ***AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, SECONDARY BENEFICIARIES WHICH***
32 ***INCLUDE CURRENTLY ENROLLED NUTRITIONALLY-AT-RISK***
33 ***ADOLESCENT PREGNANT MOTHERS IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS,***
34 ***CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, OTHER MARGINALIZED OR***
35 ***VULNERABLE GROUPS INCLUDING INDIGENOUS LEARNERS AS***
36 ***DEFINED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11510, LEARNERS***
37 ***PARTICIPATING IN REMEDIAL, INTERVENTION AND***
38 ***SUPPLEMENTARY LEARNING PROGRAMS, AND***
39 ***UNDERNOURISHED STUDENTS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION***
40 ***ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AMONG OTHERS, MAY BE***
41 ***COVERED UNDER THE SCHOOL-BASED FEEDING PROGRAM.***
42

43 (c) [~~Milk—Feeding Program~~] **SUPPLEMENTARY MILK**
44 **PROGRAM. — [The NCAs shall coordinate with][t] The Department of**

Agriculture (DA), the National Dairy Authority, the Philippine Carabao Center and the Cooperative Development Authority, **IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPED AND DSWD, SHALL IMPLEMENT A SUPPLEMENTARY MILK PROGRAM WHICH WILL INCORPORATE** ~~[for the incorporation of]~~ fresh milk, ~~[and]~~ fresh milk-based food products, **OR MILK-BASED SUBSTITUTES** in the ~~[fortified meals and]~~ cycle menu in accordance with Republic Act No. 8172, otherwise known as the "Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000," ~~[utilizing, as far as practicable, locally produced milk in order to enhance its nutritional content and, at the same time, help boost livelihood opportunities for local dairy farmers and the local dairy industry;]~~ **IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY MILK PROGRAM, THE DA SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROCUREMENT, PAYMENT, AND DELIVERY OF THE MILK SUPPLY;**

(d) Micronutrient ~~[Supplements]~~ **SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM.** - ~~[The NCAs, in coordination with]~~ **IN COORDINATION WITH THE DSWD AND DEPED,** the DOH^[7] shall provide **AGE-APPROPRIATE AND NEEDS-BASED** micronutrient supplements to the Program beneficiaries, **AND IMPLEMENT** ~~[including]~~ the use of iodized salt in accordance with Republic Act No. 8172, otherwise known as the "Salt Iodization or ASIN" law; **PROVIDED, THAT SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, THE DEPED SHALL ADMINISTER WEEKLY IRON AND FOLIC ACID SUPPLEMENTATION TO FEMALE ADOLESCENTS/ INCLUDING ELIGIBLE FEMALE LEARNERS IN THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM, PRIORITIZING AREAS WITH HIGH PREVALENCE OF ANEMIA AMONG INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE NNC AND DOST-FNRI SHALL COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH THE DEPED IN IDENTIFYING AREAS WITH HIGH PREVALENCE OF ANEMIA FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.**

(e) xxx;

(f) xxx;

(g) xxx; ~~[and]~~

(h) xxx; **AND**

(i) ***CENTRAL KITCHEN IN EVERY SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE.***
- THERE IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED A CENTRAL KITCHEN IN EVERY SCHOOLS DIVISION OR INTER-LGU CLSUTER, WHICH SHALL BE

1 OPERATED, MAINTAINED, AND SUPERVISED BY THE DEPED, TO
2 PREPARE AND FACILITATE DISTRIBUTION OF FORTIFIED MEALS
3 TO BENEFICIARIES WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE DIVISIONS.”
4

5 **Section 3.** A new Section 5 is hereby inserted and subsequent Sections shall be
6 renumbered accordingly. The new Section 5 shall read as follows:
7

8 “SEC. 5. *DIRECT PURCHASE FROM FARMERS AND*
9 *FISHERFOLK.* - IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL
10 NUTRITION PROGRAM AS DEFINED UNDER SECTION 4 OF THIS
11 ACT, DEPED, DSWD AND DA, AS THE CASE MAY BE, MAY
12 DIRECTLY PROCURE OR PURCHASE LOCALLY-PRODUCED
13 DAIRY, AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERY PRODUCTS DIRECTLY
14 FROM ACCREDITED FARMERS, FISHERFOLK, AND THEIR
15 COOPERATIVES OR ASSOCIATIONS, AS DEFINED UNDER
16 REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11321, OR THE "SAGIP SAKA ACT", SUBJECT TO
17 GUIDELINES ISSUED BY RELEVANT NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
18 AGENCIES.”
19

20 **Section 4.** Section 8 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:
21

22 “Sec. 8. *Private Sector Participation.* - The NGAs shall encourage the
23 participation of the private sector in the Program which shall include,
24 among others, PTAs, private corporations, peoples and nongovernment
25 organizations and such other groups or organizations, both foreign and
26 local, that may want to be partner in whole or in part with the
27 implementation of the Program: *PROVIDED, THAT, ALL*
28 *PARTNERSHIPS SHALL ADHERE TO EXISTING GOVERNMENT*
29 *GUIDELINES ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, AND OTHER*
30 *APPLICABLE RULES AND REGULATIONS. PRIVATE SECTOR*
31 *PARTICIPATION UNDER THIS ACT MAY QUALIFY AS*
32 *ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS UNDER EXISTING CORPORATE*
33 *SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) OR TAX INCENTIVE*
34 *FRAMEWORKS.*”
35

36 **Section 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within one hundred eighty
37 (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, DepEd and DA shall promulgate
38 the implementing rules and regulations necessary to ensure the efficient and effective
39 implementation of this Act: *Provided, That* the failure of the relevant agencies to
40 promulgate the said IRR shall not prevent or delay the effectivity and implementation of
41 this Act.
42

43 **Section 6. *Transitory Provision.*** – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this
44 Act the DSWD, DEPED, and the DA shall each update their respective and existing

1 policies, rules, and regulations in light of and relevant to this Act.
2

3 **Section 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
4 unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in
5 full force and effect.
6

7 **Section 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and
8 regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
9 repealed or modified accordingly.
10

11 **Section 9. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
12 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.
13

14 *Approved,*