

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5429



Introduced by Representative GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT AMENDING SEC. 3(E) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8178, AS AMENDED

EXPLANATORY NOTE

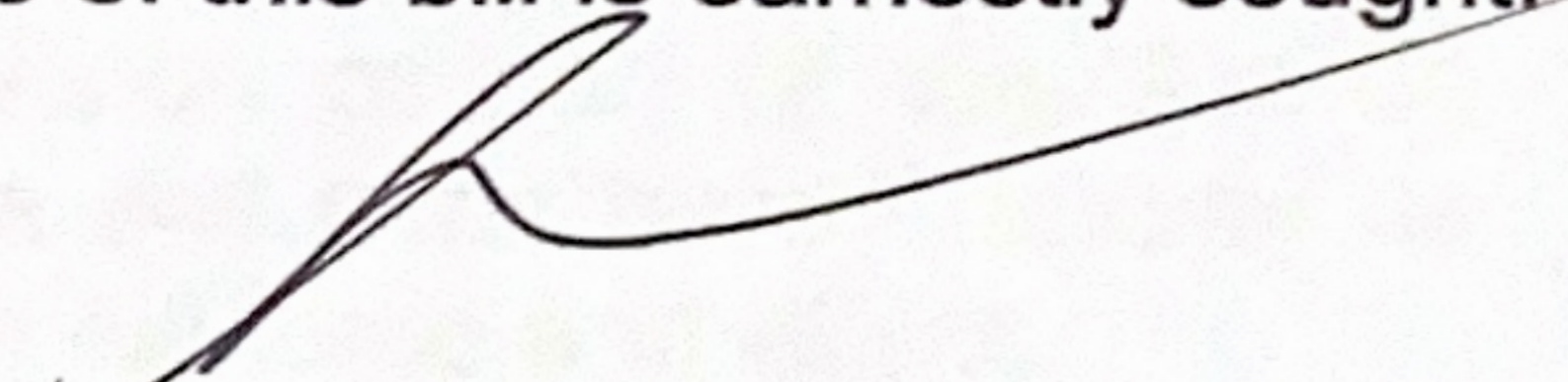
Rice is the staple food of the Filipino people, and its affordability and availability are matters of national concern. Republic Act No. 8178, as amended by the Rice Tariffication Law (Republic Act No. 11203), liberalized rice importation by replacing quantitative restrictions with tariffs, while mandating the maintenance of a buffer stock of rice primarily for use in disaster relief and emergency situations.

However, recent experience has shown that this limited definition of buffer stock is insufficient to protect consumers during times of rice supply volatility and price surges. The rise in global rice prices, supply chain disruptions, and climate-induced production shortfalls have highlighted the need for a more flexible buffer stock mechanism that can also be deployed to stabilize supply and prevent excessive increases in rice prices.

This bill seeks to amend Section 3(e) of R.A. 8178 to expand the definition of "buffer stock" to include not only rice reserves for calamities and emergencies but also reserves that may be released to the market "to augment the supply of rice during periods of shortage that cause the price of rice to rise to socially unacceptable levels."

By institutionalizing this expanded role for buffer stock, the measure ensures that government can act decisively to safeguard food security, protect consumers—especially the poor and vulnerable—from soaring rice prices, and maintain social stability in times of shortage.

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


GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Representative, 2nd District Pampanga

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

Section 1. Section 3(e) of Republic Act No. 8178 is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. - The following definitions apply to the terms used in this Act:

xxx

(e) ‘Buffer Stock’ refers to the optimal level of rice inventory that shall be maintained at any given time to be used for emergency situations and to sustain the disaster relief programs of the government during natural or man-made calamities AND TO AUGMENT THE SUPPLY OF RICE DURING PERIODS OF SHORTAGE THAT CAUSE THE PRICE OF RICE TO RISE TO SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS;

xxx”

Sec. 2. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within forty-five (45) days from effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture, National Economic and Development Authority and Department of Budget and Management shall, after consultation with directly affected stakeholders, promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 3. *Separability Clause.* -Should any provision or part of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions and parts hereof, insofar as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 4. *Repealing Clause.* - If any portion of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the portions or provisions which are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 5. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,