



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5741



Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution mandates the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that shall ensure prosperity, independence, and the improvement of the quality of life for all. Central to this mandate is the commitment to full employment and decent work for every Filipino.

In light of persistent challenges such as poverty, underemployment, displacement caused by natural disasters, and the lack of access to stable livelihood—especially among marginalized and vulnerable sectors—there is an urgent need to establish a comprehensive and flexible national employment assistance program. This will not only provide temporary income support, but also equip beneficiaries with skills and work experience that can lead to more sustainable livelihood opportunities.

This bill proposes the establishment of the National Employment Assistance Program (NEAP), which seeks to:

- a) Provide temporary employment to poor, disadvantaged, displaced, or seasonal workers;
- b) Offer short-term but meaningful work opportunities aligned with community development goals such as infrastructure rehabilitation, environmental conservation, and public service enhancement;
- c) Enable participants to earn income at prevailing regional minimum wage rates, while also potentially receiving additional allowances from local government units; and
- d) Facilitate skills development and community participation, with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at the helm of implementation.

The Program is envisioned to mobilize communities for nation-building, while simultaneously addressing short-term income needs. Projects under the NEAP will focus on high-impact, labor-intensive activities including repair and construction of

public facilities, agri-based infrastructure, environmental restoration, and other community-focused tasks.

Furthermore, the bill ensures that there is no employer-employee relationship established under this program, allowing for flexible and inclusive engagement of beneficiaries. It also empowers the DOLE and its partners to accept donations and grants to support the program and reach more beneficiaries.

In view of the above, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought to advance inclusive recovery, equitable growth, and a more resilient labor market across the country.


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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "*National*
2 *Employment Assistance Program Act.*"
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is declared policy of the State to promote a
5 just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the
6 nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social
7 services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality
8 of life for all. Towards this end, the State shall provide Filipinos with opportunities for
9 just and sufficient means of livelihood. The State likewise initiate meaningful
10 employment assistance programs to qualified individuals of poor, disadvantaged, or
11 displaced households duly identified by the appropriate national agencies.
12

13 **SEC. 3. National Employment Assistance Program.** – There is hereby
14 created a National Employment Assistance Program (NEAP), which shall provide
15 temporary employment to qualified individuals who are poor, disadvantaged/displaced
16 or seasonal workers who volunteer to work for a minimum of ten (10) days but not
17 more than (90) days in a calendar year wherein the minimum and maximum period of
18 engagement can cover a single activity or multiple activities spread out over the course
19 of a calendar year: Provided, that qualified individuals may include subprofessionals
20

21 Qualified individuals are not subject to the terms and conditions of regular
22 employment and as such, shall not be deemed to have an employer-employee
23 relationship with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), or any agency or
24 institution who utilizes their services with respect to the Program.
25

26 **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

- 1 (a) **Displaced worker** refers to a worker in the formal and informal sectors who
2 became unemployed, underemployed, or have lost livelihood as a result of
3 closure of establishment, economic crisis, retrenchment termination natura
4 disaster/calamities;
5
6 (b) **Poor** refers to individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty
7 threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot afford in a sustained
8 manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education,
9 housing and other essential amenities of life, or those who have been
10 identified as poor by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty
11 Reduction (NHTS-PR);
12
13 (c) **Qualified individual** refers to willing and able Filipino citizens who are at
14 least fifteen (15) years of age. Provided, That individuals between the ages
15 of fifteen (15) and eighteen (18) may only qualify by first obtaining consent
16 from their parent/s and/or legal guardian, and can only be employed in non-
17 hazardous work environments in accordance with the Labor Code; and
18
19 (d) **Seasonal worker** refers to a worker who performs work or service that is
20 only for a specific period of time or season of the year
21

22 **SEC. 5. Qualifications for Availment of Employment Assistance.** – The
23 DOLE shall take the lead in the overall implementation of the NEAP.
24

25 The DOLE and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD),
26 in close coordination with other government agencies concerned. as well as the
27 identified communities, may conduct a preliminary joint assessment of all poor,
28 disadvantaged/displaced individuals, including seasonal workers who signify interest
29 in undertaking work in order to determine eligibility and inclusion to the NEAP. The
30 assessment shall also take into consideration the inherent knowledge, skills,
31 capacities, and capabilities of potential qualified participants so as to properly
32 determine the type and nature of projects that are most suited to them and their
33 respective communities.
34

35 The DOLE shall facilitate basic knowledge and skills orientation and capacity
36 building trainings and seminars as deemed necessary towards project development
37 for qualified participants. The local government units (LGUs) and program partners
38 concerned may make available for use any tools and equipment necessary for project
39 development to the qualified individuals.
40

41 **SEC. 6. Types of Works and Activities under the Program.** – Employment
42 activities for this purpose shall be designed to mobilize eligible individuals, families
43 and communities to finish a project within a given time period. These projects may
44 include, but are not limited, to the following
45

- 46 (a) Development, rebuilding/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets
47 damaged. destroyed or lost due to natural disasters, such as desilting of
48 irrigation canals, development of paddy dikes, and rehabilitation of water
49 impounding dams;

- (b) Development or rehabilitation of common service facilities, which are being shared and used by poor families as production or consolidation centers like post-harvest facilities, public markets, display centers, and fish ports;
- (c) Development or rehabilitation of physical assets to open up access to areas necessary to transport rural products, such as construction of farm-to-market roads and bridges;
- (d) Protection of natural and productive assets through mitigation and disaster risk reduction measures, such as mangrove planting and rehabilitation, tree planting, seedling preparation, re-forestation and similar activities, and
- (e) Social community projects, such as repair, maintenance, and/or improvement of common public facilities and infrastructure such as schools and health centers, debris clearing, declogging of canals, debris segregation and materials recovery, stockpiling and clearing

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

SEC. 7. Rate of Assistance. – Every person qualified under this Program shall be entitled to receive compensation for each day of work at the prevailing minimum wage set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) concerned. LGUs may also provide for additional allowances to the beneficiaries in order to cover for other expenses such as transportation and food

SEC. 8. Appropriations. – The Secretary of Labor and Employment shall include in the DOLE'S programs the implementation of this Act, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DOLE. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

In addition, the DOLE may accept donations, contributions or grants from foreign and local persons, institutions and governments, among others, for the implementation of the NEAP

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DOLE and DSWD shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. Separability Clause. – If any portion of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,