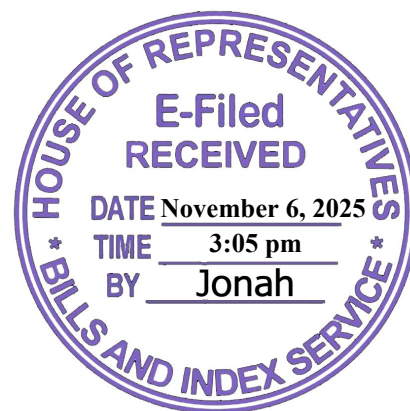


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5774



Introduced by **HON. NICANOR M. BRIONES**
Representative, AGAP Party List

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the most recent Family Income and Expenditure Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2023, the proportion of Filipino families whose incomes were not sufficient to meet even their basic food needs was at 2.7 percent or equivalent to 740,000 families¹. This translates to 4.3 percent of the entire population or 4.84 million Filipinos. This is based on their computed monthly food poverty threshold for a family of five at Php 9,581. However, as the PSA reportedly admitted, this number is not reflective of the actual food spending and is “insufficient”. Thus, this implied that the actual food spending is higher among Filipinos.

Using the above figures as the minimum basis, it can be surmised that many Filipinos still suffer from involuntary hunger. PSA unemployment rate² as of August 2025 is at 3.9 percent, equating to 2.03 million individuals. Meanwhile, underemployment for the same period is at 10.7 percent or 5.38 million Filipinos. Together, this constitutes more than six percent (6%) of the total population.

The PSA also cited in their 2023 Poverty Statistics³ that indigenous peoples, fisherfolks, and farmers rank the highest in terms of poverty incidences, at 32.4%, 27.4% and 27.0% respectively. The report also showed that the sectors with the highest number of individuals belonging to poor families where children at 9.29 million and women at 8.66 million.

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority. 22 July 2024. PRESS RELEASE: Percentage of Filipino Families Classified as Poor Declined to 10.9 Percent in 2023. Retrieved from https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/phdsd/Press%20Release_2023%20Full%20Year%20Poverty%20Statistics.pdf on 15 October 2025.

² Philippine Statistics Authority. 08 October 2025. PRESS RELEASE: Participation in the labor force in August 2025 increase to 52.13 million Filipinos aged 15 years and over. Retrieved from <https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/iesd/Press-Release-for-August-2025-LFS.pdf> on 16 October 2025.

³ Philippine Statistics Authority. 31 March 2025. PRESS RELEASE: Poverty Incidence Declined from 2021 to 2023 in Ten Basic Sectors. Retrieved from https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/phdsd/Press%20Release_2023%20Official%20Povstat%20among%20Basic%20Sectors_26Mar2025.pdf on 15 October 2025.

Data shows that women and children, and those belonging to the agricultural sector are the most vulnerable sectors in terms of food inflation. Ironically, women, particularly those pregnant and lactating, and children are the ones who have special nutritional needs that, if neglected, will have long-term impact on their health and welfare.

On the other hand, our agricultural sector bewail the influx of imported food commodities that competes with local produce. Sadly, our agricultural producers are compelled to lower their prices in order to keep up with the low value of imported agricultural products. In effect, this pushes them further down the poverty line with significant loss of income, and thereby discourages them from engaging further in food production.

These situations call for a more proactive stance from the government in terms of aiding Filipinos. The 1987 Constitution mandates the State to promote social justice in all phases of national development and value the dignity of every human person. The right to health of people living in poverty are equally protected by the Constitution. In this regard, it is imperative for the government to ensure that Filipinos are, at the least, living decently, with adequate food on the table to meet their nutritional needs.

This representation hereby proposes the institutionalization of the Food Stamp Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), combining it with the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) Program of the agency which both involve distribution of food assistance to Filipinos. The new program shall now be called the National Food Stub Program. Food poor households identified by the DSWD shall be eligible to participate in the program. Apart from giving food aid, this program shall require the beneficiaries to participate in capacity-building and livelihood programs of the government. On the other hand, this program shall involve local retailers who sell purely locally-produced food commodities.

This bill is filed to help poor Filipino households by augmenting their capacity to buy food and improving access to employment opportunities. At the same time, this bill helps local agriculture by prioritizing the purchase of locally-produced agricultural commodities, thereby ensuring farmers of a market for their produce and decent income.

It shall be a two-way assistance—Filipinos helping Filipinos. In the long run, this bill hopes to empower poor Filipino households and Filipino agricultural producers to improve their productivity and contribute further to our national economic growth and food security.

Hence, with the foregoing premises considered, this representation fervently seeks support in the approval of this bill.



NICANOR M. BRIONES
Representative
AGAP Partylist

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 5774

Introduced by **HON. NICANOR M. BRIONES**
Representative, AGAP Party List

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE NATIONAL FOOD STUB PROGRAM TO
COMBAT INVOLUNTARY HUNGER, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Short Title of Act. - This Act shall be known as the "National Food Stub Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to free Filipinos from hunger and poverty, safeguard the health and nutritional well-being of the people and promote productivity of local agriculture. To this end, the State shall establish a mechanism that improves access of the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized sector to adequate and nutritious food, while promoting economic opportunities through job trainings and other employment activities. The State shall also provide support to agriculture by providing a platform to farmers and fisherfolk to sell their produce, thereby promoting consumption of locally-produced food commodities.

SEC 3. Definitions. – For the purposes of this Act, the following are herein defined as follows:

- a. *Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation* refers to the program of the Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD) which includes distribution of food assistance to qualified individuals/families, the amount of which ranges from two thousand pesos (Php 2,000) to five thousand pesos (Php 5,000) and given once every semester or once every quarter;
- b. *Food Stamp Program* refers to the Walang Gutom 2027: Food Stamp

Program of the DSWD, established through Executive Order No. 44, series of 2023, which provides food augmentation to food poor families to address hunger among Filipino families belonging to the lowest-bracket income as identified in the recent DSWD Listahanan.

- c. *Food Stub Card* refers to a specialized electronic debit card which contains food credits equivalent to cash that may be used to purchase select locally-produced food commodities;
- d. *Beneficiaries* refer to food poor households registered with the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) or the DSWD's National Targeting Household System for Poverty Reduction (NTHS-PR) or Listahanan identified to be eligible to one Food Stub Card; *Provided*, That qualified household-beneficiaries shall present a certificate of indigency duly issued by the local government unit (LGU); *Provided further*, That qualified household-beneficiaries are not included in the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) of the DSWD.
- e. *Locally-produced food commodities* refer to food such as but not limited to, rice, pork, poultry, beef, lamb, vegetables and fruits, fish, crustaceans, shellfish and other aquatic food products in its raw state or which have undergone simple processes of preparation or preservation such as freezing, drying, salting, broiling, roasting, smoking, or stripping, which are produced by Filipino farmers, fisherfolk, livestock and poultry raisers, and other agricultural producers;
- f. *Monthly food poverty threshold of a family of five* refers to the national average amount that a family with five members need per month to meet their basic food needs, as regularly computed and determined by the Philippine Statistics Authority;
- g. *Food poor households* refer to households whose incomes fall below the monthly food poverty threshold of a family of five;
- h. *Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS)* refers to the census of households undertaken by the LGUs that will be used for planning, program implementation, and impact monitoring of government programs on poverty alleviation, as established under Republic Act no. 11315;
- i. *National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) or Listahan ng mga Pamilyang Nangangailangan (Listahanan)* refers to the information management system of the DSWD which identifies and locates households falling below poverty threshold.
- j. *Kadiwa outlet* refers to market for farmers, fisherfolks and micro enterprises to sell locally produced agri-fishery products and basic

necessities, established under the *Kadiwa ng Pangulo* program;

SEC. 4. National Food Stub Program. – There shall be established a National Food Stub Program which shall serve as a hunger and poverty reduction strategy by providing food assistance to poor households, while helping local farmers, fisherfolk, and other agricultural producers.

The DSWD shall integrate its current food assistance programs such as the food assistance component of the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations and the Food Stamp Program, with the National Food Stub Program, as well as with the programs of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in expanding the market for local agricultural products.

SEC. 5. Program Components. – The National Food Stub Program shall have the following components:

A. Beneficiary Identification

The DSWD shall generate a beneficiary list based on the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS). If the CBMS is not available in a local government unit, the most recent National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction or Listahanan shall be utilized. The list shall be validated regularly to ensure eligibility and prevent duplication.

B. Electronic Benefit Transfer and Distribution of Food Stub Cards

Food Stub Cards shall be in the form of Electronic Benefit Transfer cards as digital means for the provision of food credits to qualified household-beneficiaries. The Food Stub Card shall be loaded with an amount of Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00) per month, provided that the beneficiary remains qualified. Beneficiaries shall select a primary and secondary cardholder who will be allowed to use the card. The Food Stub Cards shall be used to purchase select locally-produced food commodities in accredited local retailers or *Kadiwa* outlets.

C. Accreditation of local retailers

Local retailers of locally-produced food commodities shall register with the DSWD for accreditation. The DSWD and the DA shall jointly ensure that all products sold by the local retailers are sourced purely from local agricultural producers. Selling of imported food commodities shall merit the removal of the retailer from the list of accredited retailers that can participate in the National Food Stub program.

The DSWD and the DA shall jointly conduct regular monitoring inspection of the accredited retailers to ensure that products sold are all locally-produced and that such retailers are accessible to qualified household-beneficiaries.

D. Nutrition Education

The DSWD, in coordination with the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), shall provide nutrition education sessions, including but not limited to meal planning and budgeting, adoption of low-cost nutritious recipes and food diversity, to beneficiaries to promote good nutrition behaviors.

E. Productivity Enhancement and Job Network Services

The DSWD, in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), shall conduct productivity enhancement sessions such as but not limited to capacity-building sessions, and skills improvement workshops to improve beneficiaries' employability, helping them find decent work. Concerned agencies may provide assistance to aid in the processing of employment requirements of beneficiaries.

F. Compliance Monitoring and Assessment

To maintain eligibility in the program, beneficiaries shall attend in the nutrition education activities and productivity enhancement and job network services activities set forth. Regular monitoring shall be conducted to ensure that all compliant beneficiaries are included in the monthly disbursement. The progress of beneficiaries in terms of nutrition and employment shall likewise be assessed to further improve the conduct of the required sessions.

SEC. 6. *Select Locally-produced Food Commodities.* - The Food Stub card will be used to purchase select locally-produced food commodities from DSWD-accredited local retailers and *Kadiwa* outlets. The FNRI shall issue the list of recommended food commodities that may be purchased using the Food Stub card.

SEC. 7. *Phased Implementation.* - The National Food Stub Program shall be implemented in phases, beginning with the bottom one million (1,000,000) households nationwide based on the most recent CBMS or the Listahanan. Priority shall be given to those with pregnant or lactating women, children under five (5) years old, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens. Expansion to additional households shall be subject to evaluation and availability of funds. LGUs shall assist in field validation, program dissemination, grievance handling, and beneficiary profiling, in coordination with the DSWD.

SEC. 8. *Grievance mechanism.* - The DSWD, in coordination with the LGU, shall set-up a feedback mechanism as a means of gathering suggestions, recommendations, and inputs and serve as a grievance mechanism in order to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability and improve the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Lead Agency.* – The DSWD, as the lead agency in the implementation of this program, shall perform the following functions:

- a. Select and use an appropriate, effective and cost-efficient method to identify and select beneficiaries on the basis of a uniform, objective and transparent selection process;
- b. Coordinate with different national and local government agencies, including DA, FNRI, DOLE, DTI, TESDA, and other concerned agencies in the implementation of this program;
- c. Facilitate the accreditation of local retailers who will participate in the program;
- d. Set up participatory monitoring and evaluation systems and methodologies on compliance of conditions on beneficiaries and accredited retailers, implementation of operations, and output and impact assessments;
- e. Provide the seminar-workshops and training programs to educate beneficiaries and accredited retailers about the conditions, requirements, and other actions pertinent to this Act; and
- f. Perform such other functions as may be necessary or incidental to the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Personnel Complement.* – The DSWD may create the required plantilla and staffing pattern necessary for the implementation of this Act in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission.

SEC. 11. *Reportorial Requirement.* - The DSWD shall monitor the implementation of the program and shall submit an annual report to the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Philippines on the implementation of this Act. The DSWD shall likewise regularly and timely post on its website a report of financial disclosures and information about beneficiaries and accredited retailers based on geographical area, social, economic and cultural circumstances.

SEC. 12. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on National Food Stub Program.* - A Congressional Oversight Committee shall be created that will be composed of four (4) Senators and four (4) Members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively, and shall be co-chaired by the Chairpersons of the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare, and Rural Development of the Senate and the Committee on Social Services of the House of Representatives, with Chairpersons from the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform of the Senate and Committee on Agriculture and Food of the House of Representatives as Vice Chairpersons.

SEC. 13. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act, including the creation of additional personnel in the DSWD, shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the

DSWD. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within forty-five (45) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, in coordination with the DA, FNRI, DOLE, and TESDA, and other government agencies concerned, shall formulate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Penalties.* – Any person, whether or not acting in conspiracy with public officials, who, by act or omission, inserts or allows the insertion of data or false information, or who diverts from what ought to be contained in the registry, with the view of altering the fact, or aiding in the grant of the Food Stub Card to persons other than the qualified household-beneficiaries, shall be penalized with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than six (6) years, or a fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) or both imprisonment and fine, at the discretion of the court. A public official who commits any of the acts provided herein shall be penalized with temporary disqualification to hold public office. Administrative sanctions shall be imposed without prejudice to prosecution in the proper courts.

SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,