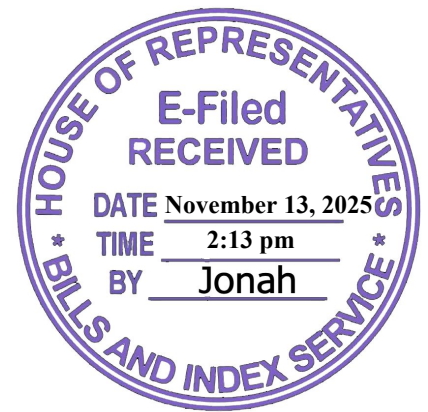


TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL NO. 5964



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has long aspired to uplift every citizen from the clutches of hunger. It is the fundamental responsibility of the State to craft and implement policies that create a just, equitable, and peaceful society. This legislation aligns with this overarching goal by committing to liberate every Filipino from the chains of poverty and ensure equal access to opportunities.

The establishment of a Comprehensive Food Stamp Program is pivotal in this endeavor. This program introduces a mechanism to provide eligible households with benefit cards that can be used to purchase nutritious items from accredited local retailers. By integrating a "work component," beneficiaries are encouraged to actively contribute to society while maintaining their eligibility for assistance. This holistic approach aims to break the cycle of poverty by fostering self-sufficiency and empowerment.

The collaboration between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) adds a strategic dimension to this initiative. By capitalizing on the strengths of both departments, we endeavor to link rural agricultural production with urban food needs, thereby addressing poverty from both ends and fostering sustainable development.

The bill ensures that while we address the immediate need for nutritional assistance, we also lay the foundation for long-term socioeconomic empowerment.

In closing, we express our ardent hope that our fellow legislators recognize the significance of this bill and join us in supporting the creation of a Comprehensive Food Stamp Program that will become our commitment to a prosperous, equitable, and food-secure Philippines.

For the foregoing reason, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON
Manila Teachers Party-list

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL NO. 5964

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE MA. NINA FRANCESCA P. LACSON**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM TO
ALLEVIATE POVERTY AMONG DISADVANTAGED HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS
THE NATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy - The State hereby declares its unwavering commitment to liberate all Filipinos from the shackles of hunger and poverty, ensuring equitable access to opportunities within a just, peaceful, and inclusive society. Furthermore, the government shall spearhead the formulation, execution, and synchronization of social welfare and development policies and initiatives, particularly aimed at empowering impoverished and marginalized sectors.

SECTION 2. Establishment of the Comprehensive Food Stamp Program - To address the critical issue of food insecurity, a Comprehensive Food Stamp Program is hereby established.

- a.) Identified households by the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall receive benefit cards pre-loaded with food credits totaling Php5,000.00.
- b.) Cardholders are authorized to purchase an assortment of nutritious items from local retailers accredited by the Department of Agriculture.
- c.) The program shall incorporate conditional terms, necessitating cardholders to engage in work opportunities in order to sustain their benefits. The DSWD, in coordination with the local government units, shall identify this work component.
- d.) Eligibility extends to households earning not more than Php 8,000.00 per month for a maximum of 6 months. *Provided*, that the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall conduct a periodic review of this amount, taking into account the current prices of food

supplies and income level, and if warranted, recommend the necessary increase in the amount of the credits.

SECTION 3. Integration of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Strategies - Collaboration between the DSWD and the DA shall be implemented to harmonize the planned food stamp program with the DA's strategies aimed at boosting the market for local agricultural products.

SECTION 4. Annual Progress Report - The Secretary of DSWD shall annually compile a report outlining the status of the Food Stamp Program's implementation. This report will be submitted to the Chairpersons of the Senate's Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development, and House of Representatives' Committee on Social Services.

SECTION 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations - The concerned government departments and agencies, entrusted with the task of executing this Act, shall formulate the requisite rules and regulations within sixty (60) days after the Act's enactment to facilitate its effective implementation.

SECTION 6. Appropriations - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the departments and agencies concerned. Thereafter, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or sections thereof that are inconsistent with this Act's provisions are hereby nullified or adjusted accordingly.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause - If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is found unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining sections and provisions shall remain unaffected.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause - This Act shall become effective fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) nationally circulated newspapers, whichever occurs sooner.

Approved,