

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6226



Introduced by Representative **MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS**

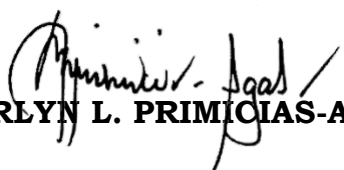
EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill which seeks to create the “Rural Employment Assistance Program” for the benefit of qualified head of the family, or single adult member of poor households in the rural areas has already been approved by the House of Representatives on its 3rd and final reading in the 17th Congress. So as to equitably render meaningful the definition of social justice in the rural areas, it is but imperative to refile the said bill to economically empower the poor and the marginalized in the countryside.

Section 1, Article 13 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides, “The Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measure that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good.”

It includes the commitment to create economic opportunities for the poor through effective legislative measures. As defined under this act, the term “poor” refers to individuals and families whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life, or those who have been identified as poor by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction. A “rural area” refers to a barangay with at least fifty percent (50%) land area devoted to agriculture, timberland, forest and/or pasture land as determined by the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of the concerned local government unit. Through the Rural Employment Assistance Program, temporary employment will be given to qualified individuals.

Approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A RURAL 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 “Rural Employment
2 Assistance Program Act”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the declared policy of the State to
4 promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and
5 independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies
6 that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising
7 standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Towards this ends,
8 the State shall provide employment assistance to a qualified head of a family
9 or single adult member of poor households in rural areas identified by the
10 National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction(NHTS-PR) of the
11 Department of Social Welfare and Development(DSWD).

12 **SEC. 3. Rural Employment Assistance Program.** – There is hereby
13 created a Rural Employment Assistance Program (REAP), which shall provide
14 temporary employment to every qualified head of a family or single adult
15 member of a poor family in rural areas who volunteers to do unskilled labor
16 for a minimum of forty five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in a
17 calendar year.

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

19 (a) Poor refers to individuals and families whose income fall below the
20 poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot afford in a
21 sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health,
22 education, housing and other essential amenities of life, or those who have
23 been identified as poor by the NHTS-PR;

24 (b) Rural area refers to any barangay with atleast fifty percent (50%) land
25 area devoted to agriculture, timberland, forestland/or pasture land as

determined by the Comprehensive Land Use plan of the concerned local government unit (LGU); and

(c) Unskilled labor refers to a segment of the workforce associated with a limited skill set or minimal economic value for the work performed. It is generally characterized by the lower educational attainment, such as a high school diploma, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or lack thereof, and typically results in lower wages.

SEC. 5. Qualifications for Availment of Employment Assistance. – The DSWD, in close coordination with the LGUs and other concerned government agencies, shall conduct an assessment of all poor individuals and families in rural areas who signify interest in undertaking work as unskilled labor to determine eligibility in availing of the employment assistance program. It shall take the lead in the implementation of the REAP along project identification, implementation and monitoring of the works and activities.

Employment activities for this purpose shall be designed to mobilize eligible individuals and families to finish a project in a given period. These projects may include the following:

(a) Development, rebuilding/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets destroyed or lost due to natural disasters such as desilting of irrigation canals, development of paddy dikes, and rehabilitation of water 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 postharvest facilities, and public markets;

(c) Development or rehabilitation of common service facilities, up access to areas necessary to transport rural products such as construction of farm to market roads and bridges; and

(d) Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures such as mangrove planting and rehabilitation, tree planting and similar activities.

SEC. 6. Rate of Assistance. – Every person qualified under this Program shall be entitled to receive compensation for each day of work employment assistance equal to the applicable minimum wage set by the concerned Regional Tripartite Wage and Productivity Board (RTWPB).

SEC. 7. Appropriations. – The Secretary of Social Welfare and Development shall be included in the DSWD's program the implementation of this Act, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DSWD. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

In addition, the DSWD may accept the donation, contributions or grants from various sources for the implementation of the REAP.

70 **SEC. 8.** Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days
71 after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall, in
72 consultation with the Secretary of the Development of the Interior and Local
73 Government, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective
74 implementation of this Act.

75 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared
76 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected
77 hereby shall remain in full force and effect.

78 **SEC. 10. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
79 publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.
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81 Approved,