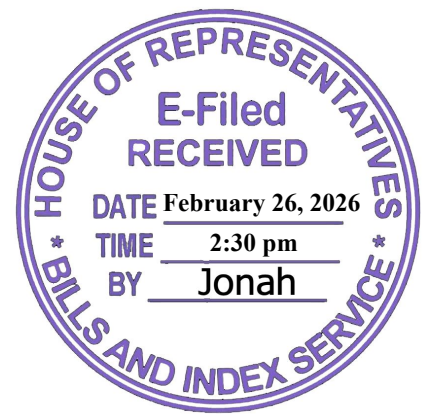


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8131



Introduced by **Representative Florabel Co Yatco**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Malnutrition is not just a health issue... it is a national concern that affects our children's future and our country's progress.

A World Bank study estimates that childhood undernutrition cost the Philippines approximately US\$4.4 billion, or about 1.5% of GDP, in 2015 alone.¹ This significant economic loss reflects the long-term impact of poor nutrition on productivity, employability, and human capital formation. The same study emphasizes that investments in nutrition are among the most cost-effective strategies for national growth.²

Recent findings of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) under its Expanded National Nutrition Survey show that stunting remains prevalent among Filipino adolescents, particularly those from rural areas and from the poorest households.³ Adolescence is a critical period of rapid growth and brain development. Proper nutrition at this stage directly affects concentration, cognitive performance, school attendance, and overall academic achievement.

However, many secondary school learners from low-income families continue to face limited access to adequate and nutritious meals. While Republic Act No. 11037 or the "Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act" institutionalized the National Feeding Program for undernourished children in public day care centers and elementary schools,⁴ coverage does not extend to learners in secondary education.

This measure therefore seeks to expand the National Feeding Program to include qualified secondary school students, ensuring that our adolescents receive the nutritional support necessary for healthy growth and improved learning outcomes.

As NANAY, the undersigned firmly believes that when we nourish our children, we strengthen the very foundation of our nation.

The immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


FLORABEL CO YATCO
Representative
NANAY Partylist

World Bank, *The Economic Consequences of Undernutrition in the Philippines: A Damage Assessment Report* (2017).

Ibid.

Department of Science and Technology–Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI), *Expanded National Nutrition Survey (ENNS): 2018–2019 Results on Stunting Among Filipino Adolescents* (released 2020).

Republic Act No. 11037 (2018), "An Act Institutionalizing a National Feeding Program for Undernourished Children in Public Day Care, Kindergarten and Elementary Schools."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H.B. No. 8131

Introduced by Hon. Florabel Co Yatco

AN ACT EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF THE NATIONAL FEEDING
PROGRAM TO INCLUDE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11037 OR THE "MASUSTANSYANG PAGKAIN
PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO ACT"

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

SECTION 1. Short Title – “This Act shall be known as the Expanded National Feeding Program Act.”

SEC. 2. Section 4(b) of Republic Act No. 11037, otherwise known as the “*Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act*”, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“**Section 4(b). School-Based Feeding Program.** — The DepEd shall implement a school-based feeding program for undernourished public school children from kindergarten to Grade Twelve (12): *Provided*, That the Program shall include the provision of at least one (1) fortified meal to all undernourished public kindergarten, elementary, and secondary school children for a period of not less than one hundred twenty (120) days in a year: *Provided, further*, That the cost of the aforementioned meals shall ensure that school children receive the appropriate amount of nutrition, which may be adjusted every year to account for inflation and for nutritional adjustments as recommended by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI): *Provided, furthermore*, That for each school division of the DepEd, meal distribution and other overhead costs of the program shall not be more than ten percent (10%) of the total meal cost: *Provided, finally*, That in the preparation of fortified meals, the DepEd shall collaborate with recognized parents’ organizations, as well as the parents of the beneficiaries of the Program, whenever applicable.”

SEC. 3. Separability Clause. — Should any provision of this Act be declared unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 4. 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, amended, or modified accordingly.

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,