

N Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8546**



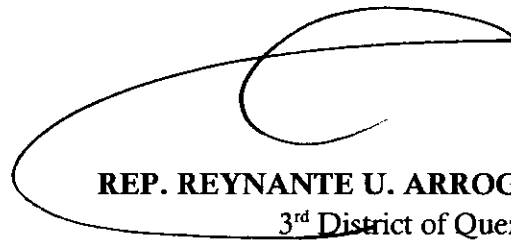
Introduced by Representative Reynante U. Arrogancia

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 2024, the UNICEF reported that around 18% of Filipino children suffer from malnutrition¹ which could cause challenges affecting a child's growth, development and future opportunities. Malnutrition among school children has adverse implications in their academic performance and attendance, which are key drivers in their academic development – impeding effective learning experiences and deterring educational growth.²

This bill seeks to increase the accessibility of the school-based feeding program under Republic Act No. 11037, or the Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Act, to include high school students in the national feeding program. This measure also seeks to strengthen community health systems, promote food security, and sustainable economic growth by providing nutritious, locally sourced meals to our Filipino youth in school, while strengthening the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolk.

Similar versions of this bill were filed in the previous Congress and it is hoped that in the 20th Congress, it will finally become a law.



REP. REYNANTE U. ARROGANCIA
3rd District of Quezon

¹UNICEF (2024). 1 in 4 children globally live in severe child food poverty due to inequity, conflict, and climate crises.

²Amodu, M. et.al. (2024). Risk Factors of Malnutrition among In-School Children and Adolescents in Developing Countries: A Scoping Review

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House Bill No. **8546**

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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL NUTRITION PROGRAM, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11037, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“MASUSTANSYANG PAGKAIN PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO ACT”,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act, the following terms shall be understood to mean as follows, to wit:

(A) ADOLESCENT REFERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE AGE OF TEN (10) TO NINETEEN (19) YEARS, WHO ARE IN TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD.

(a) (B) Cycle Menu refers to standardized menus prepared by the national government agencies (NGAs), in coordination with the National Nutrition Council (NNC), ~~and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs) FOR DAY CARE CENTERS,~~ which shall be contextualized and drawn up, among others, according to age range, location and/or type of school, and local cultural and/or religions eating preferences: *Provided, That* such menus shall have as many varieties and selections as may necessary taking into account its availability in the place or locality where the day care center or school is located;

(b) (C) EARLY CHILDHOOD REFERS TO THE PERIOD FROM BIRTH TO THE AGE OF EIGHT (8), REPRESENTING A CONNECTED AND PROGRESSIVE SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT;

(e) (D) Fortified Meal refers to a **HOT** meal with deliberately increased content of essential micronutrients so as to improve the nutritional quality of the food and provide the level of calories and protein as prescribed by the NNC which shall consist of at least one-third (1/3) of the daily requirement based on the Philippine Dietary Reference Intake (PDRI) **OR NUTRITIOUS FOOD PRODUCTS (NFP) DEVELOPED BY FNRI;**

(d) (E) x x x;

(e) (F) **MILK-BASED SUBSTITUTE REFERS TO A PRODUCT THAT HAS UNDERGONE PROCESSING TO EXTEND SHELF LIFE, WHILE RETAINING THE ESSENTIAL NUTRITIONAL PROPERTIES OF MILK. THESE INCLUDE, AMONG OTHERS, STERILIZED MILK AND POWDERED MILK.**

(f) (G) x x x;

(g) (H) Undernourished Child refers to a child who has been supplied with less than the minimum amount of ~~foods~~ **FOOD** essential for sound health and growth. For purposes of this Act, it shall include children who are suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition as well as those who are considered as wasted, severely wasted, or stunted under the World Health Organization Child Growth.”

SEC. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 4. National ~~Feeding~~ **NUTRITION** Program. – The National ~~Feeding~~ **NUTRITION** Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, is hereby established to address undernutrition among Filipino children.

The program shall have the following components and coverage:

(a) Supplemental Feeding Program for ~~Day—Care—Children~~ **EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE.** – The DSWD, in coordination with the LGUs concerned, shall implement a supplemental feeding program for undernourished children with ages ~~three (3)~~ **TWO (2)** to five (5) years. The Program shall be administered in day care centers or in any other facility which can be used for such purpose: *Provided,* That the Program shall include the provision of at least one (1) fortified **HOT** meal for a period of one hundred ~~twenty (120)~~ **SIXTY (160)** days in a year: *Provided, further,* That in the preparation of fortified **HOT** meals, the DSWD shall work in collaboration with recognized parents’ organization.

THE DSWD, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL (NNC) AND THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (ECCD) COUNCIL, SHALL STRENGTHEN THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION COMPONENTS OF THE PARENT EFFECTIVENESS SERVICE PROGRAM, ESPECIALLY FOR THE FAMILIES OF THE TARGET BENEFICIARIES.

THE DSWD SHALL COLLABORATE CLOSELY WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) AND THE LGUs IN PROVIDING HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES TO UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN BELOW TWO (2) YEARS OF AGE. THE ECCD COUNCIL SHALL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN ENSURING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS ARE INTEGRATED WITH NUTRITION SERVICES.

- (b) School-Based Feeding Program. – The DepEd shall implement a School-Based Feeding Program **WHICH SHALL COVER:** ~~for undernourished public school children from kindergarten to grade six (6):~~ (1) **UNIVERSAL FEEDING FOR ALL LEARNERS FROM KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3, REGARDLESS OF NUTRITIONAL STATUS; AND (2) TARGETED FEEDING FOR ALL UNDERNOURISHED LEARNERS FROM GRADES 4 TO 6:** *Provided,* That the Program shall include the provision of at least one (1) fortified **HOT** meal to all ~~undernourished~~ **THE COVERED** public elementary school children for a period of not less than one hundred ~~twenty (120)~~ **SIXTY (160)** days in a year: **PROVIDED, FURTHER,** THAT SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, SECONDARY BENEFICIARIES WHICH INCLUDE CURRENTLY ENROLLED NUTRITIONALLY-AT-RISK ADOLESCENT PREGNANT MOTHERS IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS, CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, OTHER MARGINALIZED OR VULNERABLE GROUPS INCLUDING INDIGENOUS LEARNERS AS DEFINED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11510, LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN REMEDIAL, INTERVENTION AND SUPPLEMENTARY LEARNING PROGRAMS, AND UNDERNOURISHED STUDENTS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AMONG OTHERS, MAY BE COVERED UNDER THE SCHOOL-BASED FEEDING PROGRAM.

- (c) ~~Milk Feeding Program~~ **SUPPLEMENTARY MILK PROGRAM.** – The ~~NGAs shall coordinate with the~~ The Department of Agriculture (DA), the National Dairy Authority, the Philippine Carabao Center and the Cooperative Development Authority, **IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPED AND**

DSWD, SHALL IMPLEMENT A SUPPLEMENTARY MILK PROGRAM WHICH WILL INCORPORATE, ~~for the incorporation of fresh milk, and fresh milk-based food products,~~ OR MILK-BASED SUBSTITUTES in the ~~fortified meals and cycle menu~~ in accordance with Republic Act No. 8172, otherwise known as the "Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000." ~~utilizing as far as practicable, locally produced milk in order to enhance its nutritional content and, at the same time, help boost livelihood opportunities for local dairy farmers and the local dairy industry;~~ IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY MILK PROGRAM, THE DA SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROCUREMENT, PAYMENT, AND DELIVERY OF THE MILK SUPPLY;

- (d) ~~Micronutrient Supplements~~ SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM. – The NGAs, ~~in coordination with~~ IN COORDINATION WITH THE DSWD AND DEPED, the DOH shall provide AGE-APPROPRIATE AND NEEDS-BASED micronutrient supplements to the Program beneficiaries, AND IMPLEMENT ~~including~~ the use of iodized salt in accordance with Republic Act No. 8172, otherwise known as the "Salt Iodization or ASIN" Law; *PROVIDED*, THAT SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, THE DEPED SHALL ADMINISTER WEEKLY IRON AND FOLIC ACID SUPPLEMENTATION TO FEMALE ADOLESCENTS, INCLUDING ELIGIBLE FEMALE LEARNERS IN THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM, PRIORITIZING AREAS WITH HIGH PREVALENCE OF ANEMIA AMONG INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN: *PROVIDED, FURTHER*, THAT THE NNC AND DOST-FNRI SHALL COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH THE DEPED IN IDENTIFYING AREAS WITH HIGH PREVALENCE OF ANEMIA FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.

x x x

- (g) and

- (h) x x x; AND

- (i) CENTRAL KITCHEN IN EVERY SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE. – THERE IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED A CENTRAL KITCHEN IN EVERY SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE, WHICH SHALL BE OPERATED, MAINTAINED, AND SUPERVISED BY THE DEPED, WHICH SHALL PREPARE AND FACILITATE DISTRIBUTION OF FORTIFIED MEALS TO BENEFICIARIES WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE DIVISIONS."

151 **SEC. 3.** A new Section 5 is hereby inserted, and subsequent Sections shall be renumbered
152 accordingly. The new Section 5 read as follows:
153

154 **“SEC. 5. DIRECT PURCHASE FROM FARMERS AND**
155 **FISHERFOLK. – IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL**
156 **NUTRITION PROGRAM AS DEFINED UNDER SECTION 4 OF THIS**
157 **ACT, DEPED, DSWD, AND DA, AS THE CASE MAY BE, MAY**
158 **DIRECTLY PROCURE OR PURCHASE LOCALLY-PRODUCED DAIRY,**
159 **AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERY PRODUCTS DIRECTLY FROM**
160 **ACCREDITED FARMERS, FISHERFOLK, AND THEIR COOPERATIVES**
161 **OR ASSOCIATIONS, AS DEFINED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11321,**
162 **OR THE “SAGIP SAKA ACT”, SUBJECT TO GUIDELINES ISSUED BY**
163 **RELEVANT NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.”**
164

165 **SEC. 4.** Section 8 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:
166

167 **“SEC. 8. Private Sector Participation. –** The NGAs shall encourage the
168 participation of the private sector in the Program which shall include, among
169 others, PTAs, private corporations, peoples and nongovernment organizations and
170 such other groups or organizations and such other groups or organizations, both
171 foreign and local, that may want to be partner in whole or in part with the
172 implementation of the Program: **PROVIDED, THAT, ALL PARTNERSHIPS**
173 **SHALL ADHERE TO EXISTING GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES ON**
174 **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE RULES**
175 **AND REGULATIONS.”**
176

177 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within one hundred eighty (180) days from
178 the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, DepEd and DA shall promulgate the implementing
179 rules and regulations necessary to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of this
180 Act: *Provided*, That the failure of the relevant agencies to promulgate the said IRR shall
181 not prevent or delay the effectivity and implementation of this Act.
182

183 **SEC. 6. *Transitory Provision.*** – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the
184 DSWD, DepEd, and the DA shall each update their respective and existing policies, rules,
185 and regulations in light of and relevant to this Act.

186 **SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
187 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall
188 remain valid and subsisting.
189

190 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other
191 issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
192 modified accordingly.

193 **SEC. 9. *Effectivity.*** –This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
194 Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

195

196 *Approved,*