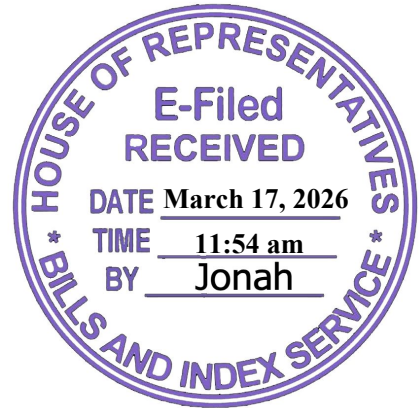


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8604**



INTRODUCED BY HONORABLE JANICE V. DEGAMO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is home to a wealth of marine life. With our rich marine and inland resources, our country is among the major fish producing countries in the world. These marine and inland resources serve as vital pillars of the national economy while playing an indispensable role in ensuring food security for millions of Filipinos.

According to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' "*2022 Philippine Fisheries Profile*"¹ there were a total of 2,302,648 registered fisherfolk in our country with 51.0% engaged in capture fishing which is the most common source of income among fisherfolk.

However, despite the richness of our marine life, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority reveal a stark contradiction: in 2023, 27.4% of fisherfolk lived below poverty line and remain to be one of the poorest sectors of our society² with some earning as little as P250 a day.³

Rising fuel prices and market volatility threaten the livelihoods of municipal fisherfolk, who play a vital role in our economy and the food security of millions.

This proposed bill establishes an institutionalized fuel subsidy program in the amount of two thousand five hundred pesos (₱2,500.00) monthly for each eligible beneficiary to support the livelihood of our fisherfolk.

¹Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, 2022 Philippine Fisheries Profile, <https://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2022-Philippine-Fisheries-Profile.pdf> (accessed 14 March 2026)

²Agriculture and Fisheries Indicators System Economic Growth: Agriculture and Fisheries, 2023, Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023, https://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/infographics/Infographics_Economic%20Growth%202023_signed.pdf (accessed 13 March 2026)

³ Senate sought probe on commercial fishing on municipal waters, Cristina Eloisa Baclig, Inquirer.net, 6 March 2026, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2191099/senate-probe-sought-on-commercial-fishing-in-municipal-waters-2> (accessed 14 March 2026)

Moreover, under this measure, beneficiaries of this program shall also be automatically enrolled and covered under the National Health Insurance program of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). The Social Security System (SSS) shall likewise provide micro-insurance mechanisms to beneficiaries of the program.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



JANICE V. DEGAMO

Representative, 3rd District, Negros Oriental

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **8604**

Introduced by **HONORABLE JANICE V. DEGAMO**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FUEL SUBSIDY FOR MUNICIPAL FISHERFOLK,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SEC. 1. *Short Title.*- This Act shall be known as the “*Bayanihang Pambangka Act of 2026*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — The State recognizes the important role of municipal fisherfolk in ensuring the food security of our country. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to provide support to the fishery sector and protect the rights and welfare of municipal fisherfolk, in recognition of their sacrifices and contributions to the nation, and in pursuit of the Constitutional mandate to promote social justice in all phases of development.

SEC. 3. *The Bayanihang Pambangka Program.*- There is hereby created the *Bayanihang Pambangka Program*, hereinafter referred to as the Program which shall grant a monthly fuel voucher amounting to not less than Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (₱2,500.00) per month for each eligible beneficiary under this Act: *Provided*, That the amount shall be adjusted annually to account for inflation, fuel prices, and fiscal sustainability. The Program shall be implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA), through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

SEC. 4. *Beneficiaries.*- The beneficiaries of this Act shall be municipal fisherfolk engaged in fishing within municipal waters, whether coastal or inland, who own or operate motorized fishing vessels of three (3) gross tons or less, either individually or through a fisherfolk organization, cooperative or association. *Provided*, That such beneficiaries are duly listed in the Municipal Fisherfolk Registration System or “FishR” of the DA, the National Program for Municipal Fishing Vessels and Gears Registration or “BoatR” of the BFAR, or the boat registry system of the concerned local government unit (LGU): *Provided*, finally, That municipal fisherfolk and fishing vessels that are not yet registered under the aforementioned registry systems may still avail of

the benefits of this Act provided they register in any of the aforementioned registry systems within the periods set by the DA, BFAR, or the LGU.

SEC. 5. *Convergence of Social Services.*- Beneficiaries of this program shall also be automatically enrolled and covered under the National Health Insurance program of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). The Social Security System (SSS) shall also provide micro-insurance mechanisms to beneficiaries of the program.

SEC. 6. *Non-Diminution of Benefits.*- Nothing in this Act shall be construed to reduce existing benefits granted under existing laws, decrees, executive orders, or any contract, agreement, or policy between the employer and employee.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.*- The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Department of Agriculture. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continuation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DA together with BFAR and in consultation with other relevant stakeholders including the Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), as well as concerned stakeholders especially municipal fisherfolk, cooperatives, and associations. Failure of the relevant government agencies to promulgate the IRR within the period provided shall subject the heads of these agencies to administrative penalties under applicable civil service laws. Should the IRR contain provisions that are contrary to this Act, the heads of the government agencies responsible for such provision, when done in bad faith or with gross negligence, shall be held administratively liable.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.*- If any provision of this Act is held invalid or declared unconstitutional, the other provisions which are not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.*- All laws, executive order, presidential decrees, presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,