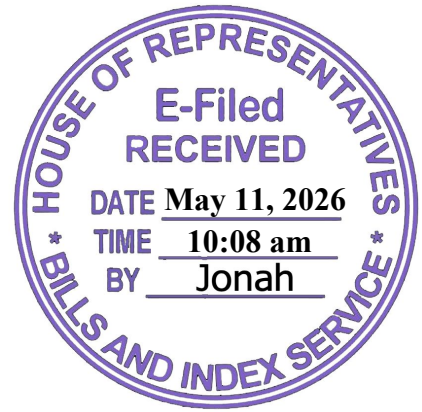




**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City**

**Twentieth Congress
1st Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. 9167**



Introduced by Rep. Elisa “Olga” T. Kho and Rep. Antonio T. Kho

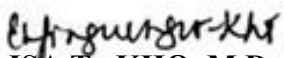
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Fuel is a significant expense for small-scale fishing operations, often making up a substantial portion of daily production costs. Volatile fuel prices directly impact fishing frequency, access to productive fishing grounds, and income stability. In many coastal and inland communities, reduced fishing output can disrupt local food supply and drive up fish prices, a primary protein source for millions of Filipinos.

Republic Act No. 8550, also known as the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 recognizes municipal fisherfolk as a priority sector and mandates the State to provide support services to enhance productivity, ensure equitable access to resources, and promote sustainable fisheries development. While existing programs of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) offer fuel assistance to selected beneficiaries, these programs are largely temporary, limited in coverage, and dependent on annual appropriations.

For this reason, there is a strong need to establish a nationwide fuel subsidy program that guarantees predictable and equitable assistance to registered municipal fisherfolk. A uniform monthly fuel subsidy would help stabilize fishing operations, reduce vulnerability to fuel price fluctuations, support livelihoods, and sustain fish production for domestic consumption.

In view of the urgent need to support the heroes of our seas and secure our national food supply, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


REP. ELISA T. KHO, M.D., FPCCP


REP. ANTONIO T. KHO



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

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Municipal Fisherfolk Fuel Relief Act."

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to promote the welfare of marginalized fisher folk and ensure the sustainability of the fishing industry. In light of volatile global oil prices, the State shall provide necessary social protection to municipal fishers to lower production costs and ensure stable fish prices in local markets.

Section 3. Definition of Terms.

- a. Municipal Fisherfolk- Refers to persons directly or indirectly engaged in municipal fishing and other related fishing activities within municipal waters, using vessels of three (3) gross tons or less, or fishing without the use of vessels.
- b. Fuel Subsidy- A financial grant or voucher system provided by the government to offset the cost of gasoline or diesel used for fishing operations.

Section 4. The Fuel Subsidy Program. – There is hereby established a Fuel Subsidy Program for municipal fisherfolk. The program shall provide a monthly fuel voucher to eligible beneficiaries, the amount of which shall be determined by the Department of Agriculture (DA) in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE), based on prevailing market prices.

Section 5. Eligibility Criteria. – To qualify for the subsidy, a fisherfolk must:

- a. Be registered under the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) or the Municipal Fisherfolk Registration (FishR).
- b. Operate a fishing vessel that is duly registered with the local government unit (LGU) and measures three (3) gross tons or less.
- c. Be a resident of the municipality or city where the subsidy is being claimed.

Section 6. Implementation Mechanism.

- a. Voucher System- The subsidy shall be distributed through a "Fuel Card" or electronic voucher system to ensure it is used strictly for fuel purchases at participating petroleum outlets.
- b. LGU Role- Municipal and City Agricultural Offices shall facilitate the distribution of cards and maintain an updated list of active fishers.

Section 7. Prioritization during Oil Price Hikes. – The subsidy shall be automatically activated or increased whenever the average price of fuel exceeds a predetermined threshold for two (2) consecutive months, as certified by the Department of Energy.

Section 8. Prohibited Acts. – It shall be prohibited to:

- a. Transfer or sell fuel vouchers/cards to non-eligible persons.
- b. Use the subsidy for non-fishing related activities.
- c. Overcharge fisherfolk by participating fuel stations.

Section 9. 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 its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Section 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DA, in consultation with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall promulgate the necessary IRR.

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

Approved,