

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL No. 9336

Introduced by REP. RAMIL L. HERNANDEZ

AN ACT EXPANDING THE NATIONAL SCHOOL-FEEDING PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11037, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
"MASUSTANSYANG PAGKAIN PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO ACT,"
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE UNIVERSAL FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM, MANDATING
LOCAL AGRICULTURAL SOURCING, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The "Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act" (R.A. No. 11037) was a landmark step in addressing hunger. However, its current implementation follows a **deficiency-based model**: it only triggers support once a child is already classified as "undernourished," "wasted," or "stunted."

This bill proposes a shift toward a **Universal Coverage Model** for all public kindergarten and elementary students, based on three critical pillars:

1. **Ending the "Wait-for-Sickness" Policy:** Targeted feeding programs often penalize children who are "borderline" or those who have recovered but remain at high risk. By the time a child is classified as undernourished, permanent cognitive and physical damage may have already occurred. Universal breakfast ensures that **no child falls into malnutrition in the first place**.
2. **Addressing "Hidden Hunger" and Poverty:** Economic status is not always reflected in a child's weight immediately. Many Filipino families belong to the "working poor" – they earn enough to stay above the official poverty line but not enough to provide a nutrient-dense breakfast every morning. Providing a universal meal removes the **stigma of the "feeding line"** and ensures that every student, regardless of their family's daily income, starts the school day with the caloric and micronutrient fuel required for learning.
3. **Institutionalizing the Circular Economy:** The "stunting crisis" in the Philippines is inextricably linked to the poverty of our farmers. This bill mandates that 30% of all ingredients be sourced from local farmers within the

province. This creates a **guaranteed market** for our agricultural sector. When we feed a child in Laguna, for example, with eggs, milk, and rice produced by a farmer in Laguna, the government's budget performs double duty: it nourishes a student and sustains a rural livelihood.

The cognitive benefits of a morning meal – improved concentration, better memory, and higher school attendance – are well-documented. By providing universal breakfast, we are not just giving out food; we are ensuring that the billions of pesos invested in the Department of Education are not wasted on hungry minds that cannot focus.

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

Approved,

RAMIL L. HERNANDEZ
2nd District, Laguna

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a vertical line with a large loop at the bottom and a small flourish at the top right.

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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 "**Universal School Breakfast and Local Farmer Support Act.**"

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes that nutrition is a fundamental prerequisite to education. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to transition from a deficiency-based feeding model to a **Universal Coverage Model**. This ensures that no child is denied a healthy start to their school day due to poverty or hidden hunger, while simultaneously creating a circular economy that supports local farmers and ensures provincial food security.

Section 3. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 4. National School-Feeding Program. – The Program shall be expanded to include the **Universal Free Breakfast Program**. The Department of Education (DepEd) shall provide a free, nutrient-dense breakfast to **all students** enrolled in public daycare, kindergarten, and elementary schools.

The Program shall be implemented **universally**, regardless of the initial nutritional status or the income bracket of the student's family. The supplemental feeding program for pregnant and lactating women under the DSWD shall continue as provided in this Act."

Section 4. Section 9 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 9. Procurement and Sourcing. – **(A) Mandatory Local Sourcing.** The DepEd and the DSWD shall ensure that at least **thirty percent (30%)** of the total volume of raw materials, including but not limited to rice, eggs, vegetables, fruit, and milk, are sourced directly from local farmers or agricultural cooperatives within the province where the school is located.

(B) Modified Procurement. Notwithstanding the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 or the 'Government Procurement Reform Act,' the implementing agencies are hereby authorized to use **Negotiated Procurement (Community Participation)** to buy directly from local farmers and fisherfolk to ensure the freshness of produce and stimulate the local circular economy."

Section 5. Section 10 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 10. Role of Local Government Units (LGUs). – LGUs shall be responsible for the logistical integration of the Program. The Provincial and Municipal Agriculturists shall maintain a registry of 'School-Ready Farmers' and coordinate with the DepEd for the weekly supply chain requirements. LGUs may use their Special Education Fund (SEF) or Development Fund to augment the 30% local sourcing requirement."

Section 6. Section 13 of Republic Act No. 11037 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 13. Funding. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). **The budget for the Universal Free Breakfast Program shall be computed based on the total enrollment data** provided by the DepEd's Learner Information System (LIS) for the current school year, and not solely on the prevalence of undernutrition."

Section 7. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, particularly portions of RA 11037 that limit feeding to "undernourished" children, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,