

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10370



Introduced by Representative AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" A. CRUZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Rice is central to our culture, nutrition, and economy. Despite its importance, however, a significant portion of this hard-earned food is wasted every day. Reports show that rice wastage in the country amounts to around 300,000 metric tons of rice annually.¹ What takes months to grow is wasted in minutes.

The proposed Half-Rice Option Act measure offers a simple and practical reform: requiring food establishments to make available a half-rice serving option at a proportionate price. It ensures that consumers are given a reasonable choice to consume only what is needed. By aligning portion sizes with actual demand, the measure promotes responsible consumption while preserving consumer choice and business flexibility. Even modest reductions could translate into millions of additional meals, reduced pressure on agricultural production, and more efficient use of public resources.

Internationally, this bill supports the Philippines' commitments under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, which calls for reducing food waste at the retail and consumer levels. Encouraging right-sized portions is a practical domestic contribution to that global objective.

For these reasons, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" AGUILAR CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan

¹ Bella Carias, DA: 300,000 MT rice wasted yearly, PHILIPPINE STAR, 2 December 2024, available at <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/12/02/2404407/da-300000-mt-rice-wasted-yearly>

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HOUSE BILL NO. **10370**

Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA “AGAY” A. CRUZ**

AN ACT
REQUIRING FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS TO PROVIDE A HALF-RICE SERVING
AS A MENU OPTION, PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE FOOD CONSUMPTION,
AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Half-Rice Option Act.”
2

3 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 promote responsible food consumption, reduce food wastage, and provide consumers
5 with affordable and proportionate serving options in food establishments, consistent with
6 national nutrition standards and public health objectives.
7

8 **Section 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:
9

10 (a) *Food Establishment* refers to any establishment that prepares, serves, or sells
11 food directly to consumers for immediate consumption, whether indoor or
12 outdoor, including restaurants, eateries, cafés, fast food establishments, food
13 courts, commissaries, hotels, inns, school canteens and cafeterias, hospital
14 cafeterias, and other similar establishments that serve meals prepared outside
15 the home.
16

17 The term shall be consistent with the definition of “food establishment” under
18 Presidential Decree No. 856, otherwise known as the Code on Sanitation of the
19 Philippines, insofar as applicable to food service operations.
20

21 The term shall not include:

- 22 (1) Retail grocery stores or establishments engaged solely in the sale of pre-
23 packaged food not intended for immediate consumption; and
24 (2) Food manufacturers, processors, or warehouses not engaged in direct retail

1 food service.

- 2
- 3 (b) *Immediate consumption* refers to food intended to be consumed on-site or within
- 4 a reasonable period after purchase, including dine-in and take-out orders.
- 5
- 6 (c) *Half-rice Serving* refers to a portion of cooked rice equivalent to one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of
- 7 the food establishment's standard rice serving and consistent with one (1) rice
- 8 exchange under the Food Exchange Lists of the Food and Nutrition Research
- 9 Institute (FNRI), which is currently equivalent to approximately eighty (80) to
- 10 ninety (90) grams of cooked rice. In no case shall a half-rice serving be less than
- 11 eighty (80) grams nor exceed one hundred ten (110) grams of cooked rice.
- 12
- 13 (d) *Proportionate Price* refers to a selling price reasonably corresponding to the
- 14 quantity of rice served and shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the price of
- 15 the standard rice serving, subject to allowable rounding as may be prescribed
- 16 in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR).
- 17
- 18 (e) *Standard Rice Serving* refers to the regular single rice portion customarily
- 19 offered by a food establishment as a full rice serving.
- 20

21 **Section 4. Mandatory Availability of Half-Rice Option.** – All covered food

22 establishments shall make available, upon request of the consumer, a half-rice serving for

23 meals intended for immediate consumption.

24

25 The half-rice serving shall:

- 26 (a) Comply with the definition provided under Section 3 of this Act;
- 27 (b) Be offered at a proportionate price as defined herein; and
- 28 (c) Be clearly indicated in the menu, menu board, price list, or similar display of
- 29 offerings.
- 30

31 **Section 5. Exemptions from Coverage.** – The following are exempt from the

32 coverage of this Act:

- 33 (a) Institutional feeding programs governed by nutritional standards issued by the
- 34 Department of Health (DOH);
- 35 (b) Pre-packaged or pre-measured meals where rice quantity cannot be reasonably
- 36 modified; and
- 37 (c) Meals served pursuant to physician-prescribed therapeutic diets.
- 38

39 **Section 6. Prohibited Acts and Classification of Violations.** – For purposes of this

40 Act, violations shall be classified as follows:

41

- 42 (a) *Major Violations* – The following acts, which directly impair consumer rights or
- 43 defeat the purpose of this Act, shall constitute major violations:
- 44 (1) Refusal to provide a half-rice serving upon request for a covered meal

- intended for immediate consumption;
- (2) Charging a price exceeding the allowable proportionate price for a half-rice serving;
 - (3) Increasing the price of the standard rice serving for the purpose of circumventing the proportionate price requirement under this Act;
 - (4) Conditioning the availability of a half-rice serving on the purchase of additional food items or services;
 - (5) Harassing, embarrassing, or otherwise penalizing a consumer for requesting a half-rice serving;
 - (6) Substituting inferior or non-comparable rice for a half-rice serving without disclosure; and
 - (7) Refusing to allow authorized regulatory officers to verify compliance with this Act during lawful inspection.

(b) *Minor Violations* – The following acts shall constitute minor infractions:

- (1) Failure to clearly indicate the availability and price of the half-rice serving in the menu, menu board, price list, or similar display of offerings; and
- (2) Other analogous violations of disclosure and administrative compliance requirements as may be determined under the IRR.

Section 7. Penalty Clause. – Any food establishment found to have violated this Act shall be subject to the following administrative penalties:

Offender	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Large enterprises, as classified by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), for minor violations	Written warning and directive to comply within a specified period	Fine of not less than Twenty Thousand Pesos (₱20,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00)	Fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00) but not more than Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱250,000.00)
Large enterprises, as classified by the DTI, for major violations	Fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00)	Fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00) but not more than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00)	Fine of not less than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00) but not more than Two Million Pesos (₱2,000,000.00), and possible suspension of business permit for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days
Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) or any other enterprise not classified as a large enterprise by the DTI, for minor violations	Written warning and directive to comply within a specified period	Fine of not less than Five Thousand Pesos (₱5,000.00) but not more than Ten Thousand Pesos (₱10,000.00)	Fine of not less than Ten Thousand Pesos (₱10,000.00) but not more than Twenty Thousand Pesos (₱20,000.00)

Offender	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
MSMEs or any other enterprise not classified as a large enterprise by the DTL, for major violations	Fine of not less than Five Thousand Pesos (₱5,000.00) but not more than Twenty Thousand Pesos (₱20,000.00)	Fine of not less than Twenty Thousand Pesos (₱20,000.00) but not more than Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00)	Fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00), and possible suspension of business permit for a period not exceeding fifteen (15) days

In determining the appropriate penalty, due consideration shall be given to the gravity of the violation, frequency and repetition of the violations, degree of consumer prejudice, size and capacity of the enterprise, and whether the violation was committed in bad faith or with intent to circumvent the provisions of this Act.

Nothing in this Act shall preclude the imposition of other applicable administrative sanctions under existing laws, rules, and regulations.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

The IRR shall provide reasonable compliance standards for weighing, serving, and menu disclosure requirements, taking into account the operational capacities of MSMEs.

Local government units (LGUs) shall enforce compliance through their respective business permitting and licensing offices, consistent with existing regulatory frameworks.

Section 9. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,