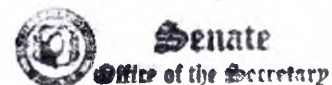


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 JUL 27 P4:51

SENATE
S. B. No. 915

RECEIVED BY: _____
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Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT
EXPANDING THE NATIONAL FEEDING PROGRAM IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11037 OR
THE "MASUSTANSYANG PAGKAIN PARA SA BATANG PILIPINO ACT"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

For nearly thirty years, undernutrition has been a chronic problem in the Philippines. The World Bank reports that in this duration, there have been almost no improvements in the prevalence of undernutrition in the Philippines, with the country ranking 5th among countries in the East Asia and Pacific region with the highest prevalence of stunting and among the 10 countries in the world with the highest number of stunted children. The report also identified poverty as one of the most important causes of undernutrition.¹

This problem is further elaborated by a 2018 study published by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) which noted that among the common causes for students - specifically those in Grades 1-6 - to drop out of school is hunger. Simply put, children belonging to poor families with highly unstable sources of income often go to school hungry which immediately puts them at a disadvantage over their other well-to-do classmates.

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/philippines/publication/-key-findings-undernutrition-in-the-philippines>

To address undernutrition, President Duterte signed, in 2018, Republic Act No. 11037 or the “Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act” which established a National Feeding Program for undernourished public-school children in day care centers, as well as those in kindergarten to Grade 6. The law was enacted to address the problem of undernutrition, with the State recognizing the demonstrated relationship between food and nutrition, and the capacity of students to develop and learn.²

Over the course of four years since the law’s enactment, concerned government agencies including the DSWD, DepEd, and DA have been working to ensure the proper implementation of the law, in spite of the difficulties brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, in February 2021, DepEd reported that they served around 3.5 million learners in over 33,000 public schools for its School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) for the school year 2020-2021 – surpassing the department’s benchmark target of 1.7 million learners.³

However, it is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic and the numerous lockdowns exacerbated the financial vulnerabilities of many households. In fact, a survey conducted by the Social Weather Station showed that around 12.2% or an estimated 3.1 million Filipino families experienced “involuntary” hunger from January to April 2022 due to lack of food. The number of Filipino households who experienced hunger was 0.4 percentage points higher than the 11.8 percent or estimated 3 million families recorded in December 2021.⁴

Through this measure, we will aim to address what is identified as among the biggest problems of the student population by expanding the coverage of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) as mandated by RA 11037 to include learners

² Sec. 2, Republic Act No. 11037 or the Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act

³ <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2021/02/20/depeds-school-based-feeding-program-records-3-5-million-student-beneficiaries-for-sy-2020-2021/>

⁴ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1176050#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20SWS'%20April,due%20to%20lack%20of%20food.>

from Grades 7 to 12 to ensure that proper government interventions are in place for the youth in their formative and adolescent years.

In our overarching goal to ensure the country's survival, recovery, revitalization from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to send a strong message that investments in our human capital resources, specifically our youth, remains of tantamount importance.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SONNY ANGARA', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

SONNY ANGARA

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AN ACT
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representative of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 4 (b) Republic Act No. 11037 otherwise known as the
2 "Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Act" is hereby amended to read as
3 follows:

4 "SECTION. 4 (b). *School-Based Feeding Program.* – The DepEd shall
5 implement a school-based feeding program for undernourished public school
6 [children] **LEARNERS** from kindergarten to grade [~~six (6)~~] **TWELVE (12):**
7 *Provided,* That the Program shall include the provision of at least one (1)
8 fortified meal to all undernourished public **KINDERGARTEN**, elementary,
9 **JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, AND SENIOR HIGH** school [children]
10 **LEARNERS** for a period of not less than one hundred twenty (120) days in a
11 year;"

12 **SEC. 2.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from
13 the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with
14 the National Nutrition Council (NNC) the Food and Nutrition Research Institute
15 (FNRI), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Agriculture (DA), the
16 Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and concerned LGUs, and such
17 other relevant government agencies, nongovernment organizations, and

1 development partners shall promulgate their respective rules and regulations for the
2 efficient and effective implementation of this Act.

3 **SEC. 3. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared
4 invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to
5 be in full force and effect.

6 **SEC. 4. *Repealing Clause.*** – All other laws, decrees, orders, other issuances,
7 rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
8 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

9 **SEC. 5. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
10 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general
11 circulation.

Approved,