

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



23 MAY 23 A9:58

SENATE

S. No. 2231

RECEIVED BY: _____

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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

**AN ACT
TO PRESCRIBE NUTRITION LABELING FOR FOOD PRODUCTS, AND
PROVIDING FRAMEWORK FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution, in Article II, Section 15, declares the state policy that – “*The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them*”. A crucial component of fulfilling this commitment is ensuring that citizens have access to accurate information about the food they consume.

Despite this constitutional mandate, current legislation, such as Republic Act No. 3720 or the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, does not provide sufficient comprehensive nutritional details on food labels. This gap has substantial implications as it restricts those individuals who depend on such information to make well-informed food choices crucial for managing their health conditions, allergies, and personal wellness objectives.

The urgency to address this gap is underscored by the disturbing health statistics in our country. Research from the Department of Science and Technology’s Food and Nutrition Research Institute shows that about 27 million Filipinos are carrying too much weight or are obese. This situation highlights the urgent need for clearer information about what’s in our food so we can make better choices and live healthier lives.

The proposed Act is designed to bridge this information gap. It mandates manufacturers, packers, and distributors to provide detailed nutritional information and allergen warnings on food product labels. This labeling requirement will not only benefit consumers but will also likely inspire food manufacturers to improve the nutrient profiles of their products, aligning with our national health objectives.

Moreover, the bill advocates for increased consumer education about the nutritional content of food products. This initiative supports the constitutional mandate of promoting health consciousness among the public. It encourages consumers to make informed dietary choices, thus helping to manage and prevent obesity and related health issues.

In sum, the bill is a necessary legislative measure that aligns with our constitutional commitment to health, and its enactment will significantly contribute to improving the nutritional awareness, health, and wellbeing of all Filipinos.

Hence, I recommend the swift passage of this bill.


CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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

**ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1
2
3 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Philippine Nutrition*
4 *Labeling Act of 2023*".

5 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
6 ensure that consumers have access to accurate information as to the nutritional
7 contents of food and food products to facilitate value comparison and promote a free
8 market economy.

9 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* –

10 a) *Label* means any written, printed, or graphic matter affixed to any
11 consumer commodity or affixed to or appearing upon a package
12 containing any consumer commodity.

13 b) *Package* means any container or wrapping in which any consumer
14 commodity is enclosed for use in the delivery or display of that
15 consumer commodity to retail purchasers but does not include -

- 1 i. Shipping containers or wrapping used solely for the
2 transportation of any consumer commodity in bulk or in quantity
3 to manufacturers, packers, or processors, or to wholesale or
4 retail distributors thereof; or
- 5 ii. Shipping containers or outer wrappings used by retailers to ship
6 and deliver any commodity to retail customers if such containers
7 and wrappings bear no printed matter pertaining to any
8 particular commodity.
- 9 c) *Food* means any material usually of plant or animal origin, containing
10 or consisting of essential body nutrients, that must be taken in or
11 assimilated by a person as nourishment to maintain life and growth.

12 Sec. 4. *Requirements of Labeling.* –

- 13 a) The commodity shall bear a label specifying the identity of the
14 commodity and the name and place of business of the manufacturer,
15 packer, or distributor.
- 16 b) The separate label statement of nutritional content shall appear its
17 conspicuous and easily legible type in distinct contrast by typography,
18 layout, color, embossing, or molding with other matter on the package.
- 19 c) The label shall also contain the following.
- 20 i. number of servings or other units of measure per container;
- 21 ii. the total number of calories derived from any source, and
22 derived from the total fat;
- 23 iii. The amount of the following nutrients in each serving size or
24 other unit of measurement of food –
- 25 “Total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates,
26 complex carbohydrates, sugars, dietary fiber, and total protein”
- 27 iv. any vitamin, mineral, or other nutrient required to be placed on
28 the label or labeling of food if it is determined that such

1 information will assist consumers in maintaining healthy dietary
2 practices.

3 d) If a food contains insignificant amounts, as determined by the Bureau
4 of Food and Drugs, of all the nutrients required to be listed in the label
5 or labeling of food, the requirements of such shall not apply to such
6 food if the label, labeling, or advertising of such food does not make
7 any claim with respect to the nutritive value of such food.

8 e) No packaged consumer commodity shall be distributed or caused to be
9 distributed in commerce unless it conforms with the regulations set by
10 this Act and established by the Bureau of Food and Drugs

11 *Sec. 5. Punishable Acts. –*

12 a) It shall be unlawful for any person engaged in the packaging or labeling
13 of any consumer commodity for distribution in commerce, or for any
14 person engaged in the distribution in commerce of any packaged or
15 labeled consumer commodity, to distribute or to cause to be distributed
16 in commerce any such commodity if such commodity is contained in a
17 package, or if there is affixed to that commodity a label, which does not
18 conform to the provisions of this Act and of regulations promulgated
19 under the authority of this Act.

20 b) This prohibition shall not apply to persons engaged in the business as
21 wholesale or retail distributors of consumer commodities except to the
22 extent that such persons (1) are engaged in the packaging or labeling
23 of such commodities, or (2) prescribe or specify by any means the
24 manner in which such commodities are packaged or labeled.

25
26 *Sec. 6. Consumer Education. –* The Secretary of the Department of Health
27 with the Bureau of Food and Drugs shall carry out activities which educate
28 consumers about:

29 a) the availability of nutrition information in the label or labeling of food;
30 and

1 b) the importance of that information in maintaining healthy dietary
2 practices.

3 *Sec. 7. Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or
4 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected
5 shall remain valid and subsisting.

6 *Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.* – Any law presidential decree or issuance,
7 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule of regulation contrary
8 to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or
9 amended accordingly.

10 *Sec. 9. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
11 complete publication in at least two newspapers of general publication.

Approved,