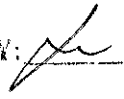




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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

*The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. (Sec. 15 Article II, 1987 Philippine Constitution)*

At the turn of the millennium, one hundred and eighty-nine United Nations member-countries reaffirmed their commitments to the founding principles of the organization and took up the task of drawing attention to the most vulnerable with the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. This instrument provided for the commitments to achieve the eight millennium development goals and the specific targets under them by 2015. This declaration reflects the vision of nations of helping one another together with international and municipal organizations, to eradicate poverty and other forms of human deprivation, and put in place the mechanisms for sustainable human development by the year 2015.

It is the target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) to reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, halt the prevalence of underweight children and lessen the proportion of population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

In the Philippines, nutrition is one of the problems that must be addressed in child care and health issues. It is reported that 4 million preschool children (aged 5 and below) are underweight and stunted, this number represents 32% of the population of children in the country.<sup>1</sup> Hunger and malnutrition leads to vulnerability to disease, especially in children. Thus pursuant with the MDG's, the Philippines must provide for programs for encouraging awareness in proper nutrition and at the same time address malnutrition such as, protein energy malnutrition, iron and iodine deficiencies and Vitamin A deficiencies.

The number of instant food mixes and other processed food which specifically cater to the palate and food sensitivities of the young reflects the lack of regard for proper diet and nutrition for children, this only shows that child nutrition is marginalized and is least understood by a majority of our population. The lack of

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<sup>1</sup> As cited from the Philippine Daily Inquirer Online  
<http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/talkofthetown/view/20100724-282969/Malnutrition-among-Filipino-kids-up> 01/17/2011 3:00 PM


government policies specifically providing for access to information on nutrition and making nutrient rich food items available for all compromises the sustenance which a growing child is suppose to obtain in order to promote healthy growth and development.

The establishment of vegetable gardens in schools can be an effective tool for hunger mitigation, In Dagupan City for example, they established Gulayan sa Paaralan and used the produce to supplement the school feeding programs. This has lead to a significant reduction in the cities number to malnourished children. As attested by its city nutrition officer Leah Aquino, the city program on hunger mitigation has driven malnutrition rates from 10% in 2007 to 7.4% in 2009.<sup>2</sup>

Aside from providing an interactive and hands-on learning environment, this bill aims that school vegetable gardens will also serve as a tool to teach the fundamental concepts about nutrition and the cultural and historical aspects of our food supply. By involving the parents and the other members of the community, school gardens can create opportunities for all to learn and make healthier food choices, participate more successfully in the educational processes and develop a deeper appreciation of their community.

Through this bill, the mechanism for nutrition education is envisioned to be established and at the same time nutrient rich food items made available not only to the students but also to the community as a whole. By aiming to eradicate malnutrition and by focusing on the health of our young citizens we can better ensure the success of our future generation.

For the foregoing reasons, the passage of this bill is sought.



**MANNY VILLAR**

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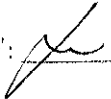
<sup>2</sup> As cited from <http://sundaypunch.prepys.com/archives/2010/04/04/aliguas-dagupan-2010/01/17/2011>  
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SENATE

S.B. NO. 2642

RECORDED BY: 

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

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**AN ACT**  
**MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL**  
**GARDENS IN ALL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS,**  
**PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, MAKING IT A REQUIREMENT FOR THE**  
**CREATION AND ISSUANCE OF PERMITS FOR SCHOOLS AND**  
**FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**CHAPTER I**

**PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1. Title-** This Act shall be known as the "Instructional Gardens Act of 2011".

**Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.-** It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Towards this end the State shall adopt and put in place hunger mitigation and poverty alleviation schemes to promote the nutrition, food security and economic stability of its citizens.

To ensure the fulfillment of this goal, all educational institutions shall be required to include nutrition and health consciousness in their curriculum, they are mandated to devote a reasonable portion of their school lots to serve as instructional gardens for the growing of vegetables and other plants having nutritional value.

**CHAPTER II**

**INSTRUCTIONAL GARDENS**

**Sec. 3. Definition of Instructional Garden** – a plot of school land or an area within a school devoted to the growing of vegetables and other nutritional plants that promotes

interactive, hands-on learning in which pupils learn composting and waste management techniques, fundamental concepts about nutrition and obesity prevention, and the cultural and historical aspects of agriculture and food and its role in the national economy.

**Sec. 4.** The Instructional Gardens Program shall be implemented in all elementary and secondary schools, public or private. They shall devote a portion of their school lots for the cultivation of vegetables and other nutrient rich plants as identified by the Department of Health.

Schools lacking in land or those located in urban areas shall avail of hydroponic gardening methods and other organic gardening technologies with the assistance of the Department of Science and Technology and other government agencies.

**Sec. 5.** It shall be mandatory for all elementary and secondary schools and to include nutrition and health consciousness in its curriculum as well as the cultural and historical aspects of agriculture and food production. This program shall be used to equally enhance any subject area including science, environmental education, mathematics, reading, writing, art, nutrition, physical education, history, and geography.

The schools shall develop a system of involving the parents of their students and the community at large in its instructional garden program to promote awareness on health and nutrition as well as the economic benefits of establishing a school, household and community garden.

**Sec. 6.-** No school, elementary or secondary, shall be established without first securing an endorsement from the Division Superintendent attesting that a plot of land has been designated to form part of an instructional garden or an area has been identified where a garden using hydroponic gardening methods and other organic gardening technologies shall be located. The provisions of this section shall apply to schools seeking the issuance of permits for their academic programs.

**Sec. 7.-** All allocations of grants, endowments, donations, or contributions and technical assistance provided by the private individuals or corporations to schools and other educational institutions for this purpose as certified by the Department of Education, shall be exempt from taxes and duties.

### CHAPTER III

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

**Sec. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The Department of Education after consultation with other government agencies, schools and education and health advocacy groups shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

**Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** - All other laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, and administrative regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

**Sec. 10. *Separability Clause.*** - In the event that any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the other provisions.

**Sec. 11. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,