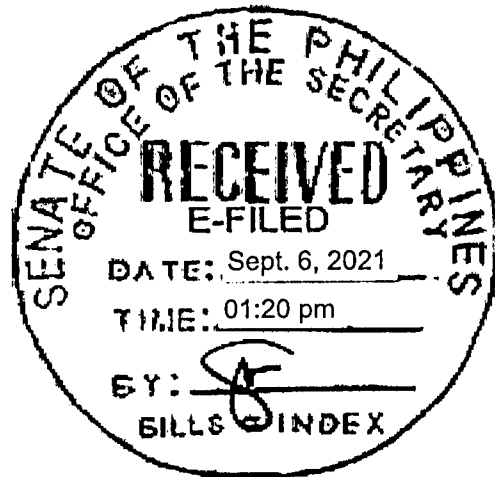


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 894

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Introduced by SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA

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**RESOLUTION**  
**URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) TO CONSIDER ACCOMMODATING ADDITIONAL QUALIFIED HOUSEHOLD BENEFICIARIES IN THE PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4PS) AND TO SUSPEND THE GRADUATION OF EXISTING HOUSEHOLD-BENEFICIARIES FROM THE PROGRAM IN VIEW OF THE GRAVE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TO POOR FAMILIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

1           WHEREAS, Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he  
2 State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and  
3 independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that  
4 provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living,  
5 and an improved quality of life for all”;

6           WHEREAS, Article XIII, Section 2 of the same states that “the promotion of  
7 social justice shall include the commitment to create economic opportunities based on  
8 freedom of initiative and self-reliance”;

9           WHEREAS, Section 5 of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11310, otherwise known as the  
10 "Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) Act", specifies that “the DSWD shall  
11 select qualified household-beneficiaries of the 4Ps using a standardized targeting  
12 system”;

13           WHEREAS, Section 10 of the same mandates that “the NAC shall ensure the  
14 grant amounts are sufficient to make a positive impact on the health, nutrition, and  
15 education of the beneficiaries and are timely received and spent by the beneficiaries”;

16           WHEREAS, Section 4 of the same “provides conditional cash transfer to poor  
17 households for a maximum period of even (7) years” but allows the NAC to also

1 recommend providing conditional cash transfer “for a longer period of under  
2 exceptional circumstances”;

3 WHEREAS, Rule XV, Section 34 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations  
4 (IRR) of the 4Ps Act provides that a beneficiary “shall be deemed to exit from the  
5 Program, whichever comes first when a) the last monitored child in the household  
6 reaches 19 years old, b) the last monitored child in the household finishes high school,  
7 c) the household reaches the 7-year duration in the Program, d) the household is no  
8 longer poor, based on the latest assessment thru the adopted standardized targeting  
9 system, e) the household voluntarily waives its membership from the Program or f) or  
10 the household commits offenses wherein the sanction is delisting, subject to the  
11 standards to be developed by the DSWD”;

12 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic, with its acute impact on the poor,  
13 undeniably qualifies under the 4Ps law’s “exceptional circumstances” which allows the  
14 NAC to recommend to the DSWD the suspension of the graduation from the Program  
15 of 4Ps beneficiaries;

16 WHEREAS, as early as August 2020, the Philippine Institute for Development  
17 Studies (PIDS) estimated that the number of poor Filipinos would increase by 5.5  
18 million. However, considering the cash assistance from the government, the projected  
19 increase of poor Filipinos lowered to 1.5 million instead;<sup>1</sup>

20 WHEREAS, the protracted impositions of lockdowns not only exacerbated the  
21 economic insecurity of poor families but also created an estimated 1.8 million new  
22 poor families in July 2021 according to a Social Weather Stations survey;<sup>2</sup>

23 WHEREAS, the shift into online and distance learning exacerbates the crises of  
24 many Filipino households, especially students from low-income and poor families,  
25 given their severely limited access to essential educational needs such as gadgets,  
26 phone load for internet access and a conducive learning environment;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abad, M. (10 August 2020) *Pandemic could push 1.5 million Filipinos into poverty – study*. Accessed last 23 August 2021 from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/coronavirus-pandemic-push-million-filipinos-poverty-pids-study>

<sup>2</sup> CNN Philippines Staff. (26 July 2021). *SWS survey: Nearly half of Filipino families find themselves poor*. Accessed last 23 August 2021 from: <https://www.cnn.ph/news/2021/7/26/SWS-June-2021-poor-families-survey.html>

<sup>3</sup> Nortajuddin, A. (17 March 2021). *Philippines: Crisis In Education?* Accessed last 23 August 2021 from: <https://theaseanpost.com/article/philippines-crisis-education>

1 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Low Income Hope Survey conducted by the World  
2 Bank shows that “the pandemic has shifted much of the Philippines’ health system  
3 focus to tracing, diagnosing, and treating COVID-19 cases.” Even with government  
4 guidelines ensuring the continuity of basic health services, the World Bank asserts that  
5 such “might not be enough to protect basic health service delivery during a  
6 pandemic”;<sup>4</sup>

7 WHEREAS, the unprecedented disruption in employment and in labor markets  
8 brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted to 4.14 million unemployed  
9 Filipinos (8.7%) in April 2021 that declined only by 1% (7.7%) in May or 3.73 million  
10 according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)<sup>5</sup>, before the present surge that  
11 necessitated the third declaration of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ);

12 WHEREAS, more Filipinos are projected by Philippine state economists to  
13 remain unemployed and below poverty line due to the economic scars occasioned by  
14 the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued lockdowns and emergence of more lethal  
15 variants, which leads to serious setbacks in our efforts to protect millions of Filipino  
16 households in sliding back to poverty; <sup>6</sup>

17 WHEREAS, it is imperative for the government to provide and deliver social  
18 welfare assistance among its existing programs in the most expeditious way possible  
19 to help the poorest and marginalized households who are barely surviving the  
20 debilitating impact of this pandemic;

21 WHEREAS, 4Ps, as an established and proven program in helping millions of  
22 poor households through its conditional cash transfers scheme, should be able to  
23 continue catering and helping its existing beneficiaries who are all affected and  
24 anticipated to slide back to poverty;

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<sup>4</sup> Cho, Y., Avalos, J., Kawasoe, Y., Johnson, D., & Rodriguez, R. (2021). *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Low Income Households in the Philippines: Impending Human Capital Crisis*. Accessed last 23 August 2021 from: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35260/The-Impact-of-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-on-Low-Income-Households-in-the-Philippines-Impending-Human-Capital-Crisis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>5</sup> Rivas, R. (2021, July 1). *Unemployed Filipinos down to 3.73 million in May 2021 as lockdowns ease*. Accessed last 23 August 2021 from: <https://www.rappler.com/business/unemployment-rate-philippines-may-2021>

<sup>6</sup> Rivas, R. (4 February 2021). *Pandemic scars: More Filipinos to remain poor, unemployed even by 2022*. Accessed last 23 August 2021 from: <https://www.rappler.com/business/more-poor-unemployed-filipinos-even-by-2022>

1           WHEREAS, the DSWD must strongly consider accommodating as many  
2 qualified household beneficiaries as possible and fully extend the government's  
3 helping hand in reaching millions of poor families severely affected by the COVID-19  
4 pandemic and assist to pull them out of poverty;

5           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, to urge the  
6 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to consider accommodating  
7 additional qualified household beneficiaries in the Pantawid Familyang Pilipino  
8 Program (4Ps) and to suspend the graduation of existing household-beneficiaries from  
9 the program in view of the grave impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to poor families  
10 across the country.

*Adopted,*

  
LEILA M. DE LIMA