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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
Senate Bill No. 1684

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by: **Senator Raffy T. Tulfo**

"AN ACT MANDATING THE USE OF A HEALTH RATING SYSTEM ON THE LABELS OF PACKAGED FOOD PRODUCTS"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the importance of health and wellness; this includes comprehensive knowledge of the food individuals consume. According to the Department of Health (DOH), the leading cause of death in the Philippines are diseases of the heart, vascular system, and respiratory system, along with malignant cancers, and diabetes. Undeniably, people who maintain a healthy diet will have a lower risk of serious illnesses and enjoy a better quality of life.

In order for Filipinos to have a better knowledge of the food they eat, this bill seeks to mandate the use of a Rating System on labels of packaged food products, in addition to the standard nutritional facts label. The Health Rating System will be calculated based on the food's nutritive value which includes the total energy or kilojoules (kJ), saturated fat, sodium, sugar content, and fiber. This approach aims to arm Filipinos with the necessary information on the nutritional content of the food they choose to consume on a daily basis and in turn lessen their susceptibility to life-threatening diseases.

In light of this, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Raffy T. Tulfo

Senator



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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Health Rating Label*
2 *Act.*"

3 Sec 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 ensure the health and well-being of its people; by providing them an easier way to
5 compare the nutritional value of similar packaged food products through the use of a
6 health rating system, in addition to the standard nutritional facts label.

7 Sec 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act, the following terms
8 shall be defined as follows:

9 a. *Health Rating System* refers to a front-of-pack labeling system that
10 measures the overall nutritional profile of packaged food products.

11 b. *Packaged Food Products* refer to products frequently purchased by
12 consumers that are enclosed in a small parcel that is commercially
13 prepared for ease of consumption. These products include ready-to-
14 eat food items such as snacks, beverages, chips, and many more.

15 c. *Kilojoules (kJ)* refers to the metric term for calorie, it is the
16 measurement of the energy people get from the food and drinks they
17 have consumed.

18 d. *Saturated Fat* refers to a type of fat containing a high proportion of
19 fatty acid molecules without double bonds, they are considered to be

1 less healthy in the diet. They are found in animal food products and
2 a number of plant oils like palm and coconut oil.

3 e. *Sodium* is a food ingredient used as a preservative, in curing meat,
4 baking, retaining moisture, and enhancing flavor.

5 f. *Sugar* refers to simple carbohydrates that provide calories for a
6 person's body to use as energy. There are two types of sugar, first
7 is natural sugar which is in whole and unprocessed foods like fruits;
8 while added sugar is found in processed food and drinks.

9 g. *Fiber* refers to a substance in certain foods, like fruit, vegetables, and
10 brown bread, that is not digested by the body but passes relatively
11 intact in a person's stomach. It is also best known for its ability to
12 prevent or relieve constipation.

13 h. *Condiments* are supplemental food that is mostly added to dishes
14 after serving in order to enhance or compliment their flavor.

15 i. *Non-nutritive foods* refer to beverages like coffee and tea and indirect
16 food additives such as noncaloric sweeteners.

17 Sec 4. *Coverage*. – All packaged food products sold in shops like grocery stores
18 shall implement the health rating system; except the following:

- 19 (1) Fresh unpacked food;
- 20 (2) Condiments;
- 21 (3) Non-nutritive foods;
- 22 (4) Single-ingredient foods not intended to be eaten on their own;
- 23 (5) Alcoholic beverages;
- 24 (6) Formulated products for infants and young children; and
- 25 (7) Food for special medical purposes

26 Sec 5. *Health Rating System Labelling of Packaged Food*. – The Health Rating
27 System measures the overall nutritional profile of packaged food products from one
28 (1) (the least nutritious) to five (5) (the most nutritious). This rating system is
29 calculated based on the following:

- 30 (1) Total Energy or Kilojoules;
- 31 (2) Saturated Fat;
- 32 (3) Sodium;

1 (4) Sugar Content; and

2 (5) Fiber

3 Sec 6. *Labelling.* – The Health Rating System will be placed at the front of the
4 packaged food product. In addition to this, the packaged food product’s nutrient
5 content will be shown below or beside the Health Rating; this includes its energy
6 content (kilojoules), saturated fat, sodium content, and total sugar content per 100
7 grams, 100 milliliters for liquids, or per pack for single-serve foods.

8 In addition, the nutrient content will also showcase whether the packaged food
9 product is high or low in saturated fat, sodium, or fiber.

10 Sec 7. *Regulating Authority.* – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) shall
11 serve as the regulating body to oversee the implementation of this Act. Furthermore,
12 the Department of Health (DoH) shall create an oversight committee, comprised of
13 representatives from the Department of Health, Department of Trade and Industry,
14 and the Department of Agriculture, who are responsible for ensuring a consistent
15 approach to the effective implementation of the Health Rating System.

16 Sec 8. *Penalties for Noncompliance.* – Any manufacturer of packaged food
17 products that violates any provision of this Act shall receive the following penalties:

18 (a) On the first offense a warning shall be issued by the FDA to the company
19 or manufacturer who is in violation of any of the provisions of this Act.

20 (b) On the second offense a fine of Php 50,000 per day shall be imposed
21 for violators who have been previously issued a warning in relation to
22 this Act.

23 (c) On the third offense the FDA shall issue an immediate suspension order
24 for the company or manufacturer who refuses to comply with the
25 provisions of this Act despite the issuance of a warning and imposition
26 of a fine.

27 Sec 9. *Approval.* – The manufacturers of packaged food products shall calculate
28 the health rating of their products and submit the rating to the Food and Drug
29 Administration (FDA) for approval.

30 Sec 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
31 regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of
32 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,