


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

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SENATE
S. No. 1682

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution:

“The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.”

According to a study published by the Institute for Labor studies, pesticides popular in the Philippines have been banned or severely restricted in the United States. Further, farmers do not know the consequences of mishandling these chemicals. Acute pesticide poisoning has been traced to unsafe practices in the handling, storing and disposal of pesticides.

Organophosphate pesticides produce both short-term (acute poisoning) and long-term (chronic) effects that affects various organs in addition to its potential of causing abnormality in the genes, cancer, and reproductive system. This underscores the need for preventive programs to ensure farmers safety and health.

This bill establishes the measures that should be undertaken by farm owners and/or operators to ensure the safety of their workers and their respective families. *


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

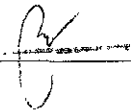
* This bill was originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress, Second Regular Session

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1 AN ACT
2 TO PROTECT THE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM THE HAZARDS OF
3 WORKING IN AGRICULTURAL SITES

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

6 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This act shall be known as the "Farm Workers' Protection
7 Act."

8 SECTION 2. *Requirements.* The following requirements shall be met at any
9 agricultural site to which pesticides have or will be applied. Farm owners or operators shall:

10 A. Conduct or cause to have conducted mandatory testing for the presence of
11 organophosphate pesticides for all handlers of pesticides, including applicators and mixers of
12 pesticides. This testing shall be conducted within one week of the arrival of such workers at the
13 agricultural site and within one week of the departure of such workers from the site;

14 B. Provide personal protection equipment which has been fit-tested to all individuals
15 who are required or may be required to wear such equipment in the course of their work, and
16 which is readily available to any worker needing to wear or use such equipment;

17 C. Provide education and information to farm workers and their families about the
18 hazards of exposure to pesticides, how to avoid such exposures to children, personal clothing and
19 possessions, and what to do if pesticide exposure or contamination occurs;

20 D. Report to the department of Agriculture every incident of pesticide exposure to farm
21 workers or their families, whether by direct exposure to pesticide applications or from drift of
22 pesticides from the application site. Such reporting shall occur within twenty-four hours of such

1 pesticide exposure and shall include the day and time of day the exposure occurred and the
2 pesticides to which the individuals were exposed;

3 E. Provide on-site washing machines for workers to clean pesticide-contaminated
4 clothing, which are separate from clothes washing facilities used by families. The farm owner or
5 operator shall be responsible to provide instruction in the proper care of clothing contaminated
6 with or exposed to pesticides;

7 F. Provide one shower facility for every five workers, with separate facilities for males
8 and females, for the removal of pesticide residues and other contaminants;

9 G. Provide one or more public telephones for workers to report medical emergencies,
10 including pesticide exposures or contamination; and

11 H. Ensure that all new housing for farm workers is located at least fifty feet from any
12 field or site, except for enclosed facilities such as greenhouses, which may be treated with
13 pesticides. Existing housing which does not comply with this paragraph shall be replaced within
14 five years or cease to be used after that time.

15 SECTION 3. *Penalty.* - The Department of Agriculture is hereby empowered to
16 establish and assess penalties or fines against the farm owners and operators for violations of this
17 Act. In no circumstance will any penalty or fine exceed P100,000.00.

18 SECTION 4. *Annual Report.* - The Department of Agriculture shall issue an annual
19 report of all farm inspections on or before March first to the legislature for the previous calendar
20 year, including compliance with the requirements contained in this Act; enforcement actions,
21 fines and penalties for non-compliance resulting from such inspections; and pesticide exposure
22 or contamination reports submitted to the Department of Agriculture.

23 SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts
24 thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified
25 accordingly.

1 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is
2 declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof which are not
3 affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

4 SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
5 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

6 Approved,