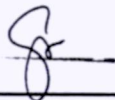


SENATE

Jul -8 P2:17

Senate Bill No. 257



Introduced by Senator FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

AN ACT  
PROMOTING THE USE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE AND VERTICAL FARMING  
IN THE COUNTRY'S METROPOLITAN AREAS TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY  
CONCERNS AND REGENERATE ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING  
FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the United Nations (UN), "the world's population is expected to increase to 9.1 billion by 2050" and around 70% of said population, as estimated by the UN Population Division, will be living in urban areas.

The UN Human Settlements Program estimated that around "250 million hungry people in the world live in cities" and that "low income urban dwellers spend between 40% to 60% of their income on food each year."

"Hunger, poverty, and environmental degradation" were identified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as "the problems that most urban areas in developing countries are facing."

Feeding the world population means increasing food production by 70% which, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), can be done "through higher crop yields and an expansion of the area under cultivation."

"Farming in the city" or urban agriculture is one solution suggested by the UNDP. It defined urban agriculture as "an industry that produces, processes and markets food and fuel, largely in response to the daily demand of consumers within a town, city or metropolis, on land and water dispersed throughout the urban and peri-urban area, applying intensive production methods, using and reusing natural resources and urban wastes, to yield a diversity of crops and livestock."

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) has stated that urban agriculture "can begin to play a central role in communities by supplementing the local food supply, creating spaces for community building, and advancing larger community health and sustainability goals."

Thus, this measure aims to institutionalize "urban agriculture" and "vertical farming" in highly-urbanized cities nationwide. They aim to reduce urban poverty,

ensure food security, promote community building, and enhance urban environment management.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Urban Agriculture and  
Vertical Farming Act of 2019.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect  
the fundamental right of every person to adequate food supply and to promote the  
achievement of self-sufficiency in food production. Towards this end, key reforms for the  
development of modern, appropriate, cost-effective and environmentally safe agriculture  
technologies are hereby encouraged in order to ensure the food security of the country.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- a) “Urban Agriculture” shall refer to the practice of cultivating, processing and  
distributing of food in or around a village, town or city. Urban agriculture also  
involves animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry and horticulture;
- b) “Vertical Farming” shall refer to the method of farming that is brought to the  
urban space by employing the concepts of indoor agriculture in skyscrapers  
and other modern buildings.

SEC. 4. *Comprehensive Research on Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming.* – For  
purposes of this Act, the respective Secretaries of the Department of Agriculture (DA)



and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) are hereby mandated to promote the use of urban agriculture and vertical farming in the country's metropolitan areas as an instrument to address food security concerns and regenerate ecosystem functions in the Philippines.

Idle and/or abandoned government lots and buildings owned by either the national government or local governments or available land resources in state universities and colleges shall be considered for growing crops, raising livestock, and producing food using the said methods.

The DA and DOST shall support and launch research activities to expand the knowledge and understanding of urban agriculture and vertical farming to be used in food production. A renewed investment in advanced technology research in order to adopt state-of-the-art technologies to improve agricultural productivity shall be launched pursuant thereto.

**SEC. 5. *Inclusion of Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming in Agricultural Training.*** – Urban agriculture and vertical farming shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for secondary and tertiary level students of both public and private academic institutions with courses on Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics, and/or other subjects related to agriculture.

The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Section within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act.

**SEC. 6. *Local Government Units' Participation.*** – Local government units shall formulate a policy on the practice of urban agriculture and vertical farming, utilizing unused spaces and idle lands. This shall require the enactment of local legislation institutionalizing urban agriculture in all levels of the LGU. Local governments shall also

1 grant necessary incentives to their constituents who actively participate in urban farming  
2 activities.

3       **SEC. 7. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this  
4 Act shall be included and incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the  
5 Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, Department of  
6 Education, and Commission on Higher Education.

7       **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within six (6) months from the date  
8 of effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Science  
9 and Technology shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to  
10 implement the provisions of this Act.

11       **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
12 unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full  
13 force and effect.

14       **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and  
15 rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended  
16 accordingly.

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

*Approved,*