

SENATE
Senate Joint Resolution No. 8

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(In substitution of Senate Joint Resolution Nos. 4 and 5, taking into
consideration P.S. Resolution No. 150)

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Prepared Jointly by the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform;
Finance; and Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development with Senators Imee R.
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De Lima, and Sonny Angara as authors thereof.

JOINT RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT
(DSWD), DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
(DILG), DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (DND), DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION (DOTr), DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND
NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR), AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, IN
COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) AND THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA), TO DIRECTLY PURCHASE PALAY
FROM THE LOCAL FARMERS FOR THE RICE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

1 **WHEREAS**, the government continues to pursue its vision of food security
2 for all Filipinos by allotting P 137.1 billion for agriculture and agrarian reform to
3 enhance agricultural productivity, support poor farmers and fisher folk, and
4 strengthen the climate resilience communities, among others;

5
6 **WHEREAS**, on February 2019, Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11203 entitled, "*An*
7 *Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the*
8 *Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice, and For Other Purposes*" was
9 enacted to help support the local rice industry specifically by creating a "Rice
10 Competitiveness Enhancement Fund" to be allocated and disbursed, as follows: (a)
11 Rice Farm Machineries and Equipment, (b) Rice Seed Development, Propagation,
12 and Promotion, (c) Expanded Rice Credit Assistance, and Rice Extension Services;

1 **WHEREAS**, despite the efforts made by the government to protect the local
2 rice industry, large stocks of imported rice have depressed the buying price of local
3 *palay* to levels way below the cost production;

4
5 **WHEREAS**, the National Food Authority (NFA) reported that they have
6 209,525.15 MT of imported rice in their custody, as of August 22, 2019, and
7 procured locally 360,657 bags of *palay* at 50 kilos per bag or 209,525.15 MT.
8 Currently, the warehouse of NFA is already full. The problem of oversupply is
9 expected to exacerbate during the period from September to October which is the
10 peak *palay* harvest season;

11
12 **WHEREAS**, latest government statistics for the average *palay* prices plunged
13 to P16.28 per kilogram from P23.10 per kilogram for the same period last year which
14 is the lowest *palay* price in seven years;

15
16 **WHEREAS**, to provide immediate support and assistance to the local rice
17 industry, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has ordered the NFA to expend their budget
18 of P 7 billion for procuring *palay* or unhusked rice from local farmers;

19
20 **WHEREAS**, the 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA) provides a total
21 allocation of P 33.9 billion for rice subsidies, the largest of which is given to the
22 beneficiaries of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under
23 the "*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)*," that can herewith be utilized in
24 coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the NFA, to buy *palay*
25 directly from local farmers. The program has a total target of 4.1 million
26 beneficiaries;

27
28 **WHEREAS**, the program grants the beneficiaries rice subsidy in the form of
29 financial assistance in the amount of P600.00 per month, equivalent to 20 kilos of
30 rice. This is in addition to the cash assistance to the same beneficiaries of P300.00
31 per month or P3,600.00 per year under the 4Ps program. During the DSWD
32 subcommittee hearing under the Committee on Finance, DSWD testified that a

1 balance currently of at least 6.97 billion remained undisbursed under the rice
2 subsidy program;

3

4 **WHEREAS**, the remaining allocations of P 2.89 billion are allotted to the rice
5 subsidy programs for military uniformed personnel such as the provision of twenty
6 (20) kilos of rice per month, in the form of financial assistance, to the uniformed
7 personnel of the Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force, Philippine Navy, Philippine
8 Coast Guard, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology,
9 Bureau of Fire Protection, and the National Mapping and Resource Information
10 Authority (NAMRIA);

11

12 **WHEREAS**, under Section 8 of Republic Act No. 11203, the NFA is tasked to
13 buy *palay* from local farmers "all-year-round" for the maintenance of a rice buffer
14 stock and can be assigned to undertake direct local buying on behalf of the
15 departments;

16

17 **WHEREAS**, local government units (LGUs) have the perennial need for rice
18 to supply the requirement of their hospitals, jail, and other local institutions, feeding
19 programs and calamity-program interventions, and they also have the funds to do
20 such purchasing of rice;

21

22 **WHEREAS**, the distribution of rice subsidy shall be in accordance with the
23 procedure, guidelines, and distribution system to be determined by the concerned
24 departments and agencies; Now therefore be it

25

26 **RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,**
27 **VOTING SEPARATELY, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, to direct the Department
28 of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of the Interior and Local
29 Government (DILG), Department of National Defense (DND), Department of
30 Transportation (DOTr), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR),
31 and the Local Government Units, in coordination with the National Food Authority

- 1 (NFA) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), to directly purchase *palay* from the
- 2 local farmers for the Rice Subsidy Program.

Adopted,