



SENATE

S. Jt. Res. No. 8

(IN SUBSTITUTION OF SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NOS. 4
AND 5, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION PROPOSED SENATE
RESOLUTION NO. 150)

PREPARED JOINTLY BY THE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE,
FOOD AND AGRARIAN REFORM; FINANCE; AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE, WELFARE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH
SENATORS MARCOS, VILLAR, ZUBIRI, PANGILINAN,
DE LIMA AND ANGARA AS AUTHORS THEREOF

JOINT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE
RICE SUBSIDY AS PROVIDED UNDER THE
PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM
(*4PS*) IN THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT
(*GAA*) OF 2019 FOR THE PURCHASE OF *PALAY*
FROM FARMERS, MANDATING FOR THE
PURPOSE THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (*DSWD*) IN
COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL FOOD
AUTHORITY (*NFA*) TO BUY *PALAY* FROM THE
LOCAL FARMERS FROM THE PROVINCES OF
PANGASINAN, ILOCOS NORTE, CAGAYAN,
ISABELA, NUEVA VIZCAYA, MINDORO
ORIENTAL, MINDORO OCCIDENTAL, TARLAC,
NUEVA ECIJA, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR AND
ILOILO AND DISTRIBUTE RICE SUBSIDY IN THE
FORM OF ACTUAL RICE, INSTEAD OF CASH
ASSISTANCE, TO THE QUALIFIED BENEFICIARIES

WHEREAS, the government continues to pursue its vision of food security for all Filipinos by allotting P137.1 Billion for agriculture and agrarian reform to enhance agricultural productivity, support poor farmers and fisher folk, and strengthen the climate resilience communities, among others;

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

WHEREAS, despite the efforts made by the government to protect the local rice industry, large stocks

of imported rice have depressed the buying price of local *palay* to levels way below the cost production;

WHEREAS, the National Food Authority (NFA) reported that they have 209,525.15 MT of imported rice in their custody, as of August 22, 2019, and procured locally 360,657 bags of *palay* at fifty (50) kilos per bag or 209,525.15 MT;

WHEREAS, the warehouses of NFA are already full, and the problem of oversupply is expected to exacerbate during the period from October to December which is the peak *palay* harvest season;

WHEREAS, latest government statistics for the average *palay* prices plunged to P16.28 per kilogram from P23.10 per kilogram for the same period last year which is the lowest *palay* price in seven (7) years;

WHEREAS, to provide immediate support and assistance to the local rice industry, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has ordered the NFA to utilize their budget of P7 Billion for procuring *palay* or unhusked rice from local farmers;

WHEREAS, the 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA) provides a total allocation of P33.9 billion for rice subsidies, the largest of which is given to the beneficiaries of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under the "*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)*," that can herewith be utilized in coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the NFA, to buy *palay* directly from local farmers, with a total target of 4.1 million beneficiaries;

WHEREAS, the program grants the beneficiaries rice subsidy in the form of financial assistance in the amount of P600.00 per month, equivalent to twenty (20) kilos of rice, in addition to the cash assistance to the same beneficiaries of P300.00 per month or P3,600.00 per year under the 4Ps program;

WHEREAS, the DSWD confirmed that a balance currently of at least P6.97 billion remained undisbursed under the rice subsidy program;

WHEREAS, under Section 8 of Republic Act No. 11203, the NFA is tasked to buy *palay* from local farmers "for the

whole year” for the maintenance of a rice buffer stock and can be assigned to undertake direct local buying on behalf of the departments;

WHEREAS, local government units (LGUs) who have the perennial need for rice to supply the requirement of their hospitals, jail, and other local institutions, feeding programs and calamity-program interventions are encouraged to purchase the rice needs from the local farmers;

WHEREAS, the distribution of rice subsidy shall be in accordance with the procedure, guidelines, and distribution system to be determined by the concerned departments and agencies;

WHEREAS, the funding for the said program grants shall be sourced from the General Appropriations Act of 2019: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines and the House of Representatives in Congress voting separately, To authorize the use of the rice subsidy as provided under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino

Program (4ps) in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of 2019 for the purchase of *palay* from farmers, mandating for the purpose the DSWD in coordination with the NFA to buy *palay* from the local farmers from the provinces of Pangasinan, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Mindoro Oriental, Mindoro Occidental, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Zamboanga Del Sur and Iloilo and distribute rice subsidy in the form of actual rice, instead of cash assistance, to the qualified beneficiaries.

Adopted,