



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 23



Introduced by Representative NIKO RAUL S.J. DAZA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a conditional cash transfer initiative designed to alleviate extreme poverty in the Philippines through a comprehensive set of interventions. Since its implementation, the program has contributed significantly to reducing the number of poor households. According to a general assessment conducted by the World Bank, 4Ps has helped lower poverty incidence by approximately 1.5 million individuals, or about 1.4 percentage points per year.

Despite the country's average economic growth of 6.3% from 2010 to 2019 and a notable reduction in poverty from 26.4% in 2009 to 16.6% in 2018, the prevalence of stunting among children has remained largely unchanged for more than a decade. Data from the 2015 National Nutrition Survey revealed that nearly one in three Filipino children under five years old are stunted, putting them at greater risk for long-term cognitive and physical impairments. This rate is considerably high given the country's income level, especially when compared with similarly situated nations, where the average stunting rate stands at approximately 20%. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have likely worsened this situation, with both immediate and long-term implications for child nutrition and development.

In light of these realities, it is both timely and necessary to revisit and amend the provisions of Republic Act No. 11310 to address the limitations in the current implementation of the 4Ps. While the program has proven effective in reaching the poorest households, it also presents an opportunity to more directly address the persistent problem of child stunting through well-targeted, food-based, and conditional support mechanisms.

At present, the only food-related subsidy mandated under the 4Ps is the PhP 750 allocation intended for health and nutrition. The additional PhP 600 monthly rice subsidy remains non-institutionalized and dependent on the availability of funds. To ensure a more sustained and impactful intervention for the poorest households, it is imperative to institutionalize the PhP 600 rice subsidy and further augment the allocation.

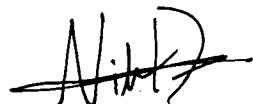
Using March 2022 data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which recorded 4,235,700 household beneficiaries, institutionalizing the PhP 600 rice subsidy and adding an additional PhP 400 per month would require a budget increase of

roughly PhP 4.2 billion. However, this amount could be significantly reduced by refining the list of 4Ps beneficiaries to focus on the 1.87 million households identified as food poor.

Although estimates vary on the precise economic returns of addressing malnutrition and low birth weight, numerous studies affirm the substantial socio-economic benefits of investing in nutrition. For instance, a study by Alderman and Behrman (1998) estimated that each case of low birth weight averted could add approximately \$510 (using a 5% discount rate) to the economy of a low-income country. Moreover, programs that provide iron, iodine, and Vitamin A fortification have demonstrated returns of about \$41 for each disability-adjusted life year (DALY) gained (World Bank, 1994, as cited in Hunt, 2005).

Beyond these measurable economic gains, the intrinsic value of saving human lives stands above all. Each life preserved through timely and targeted intervention is invaluable—beyond any economic calculation.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this legislative measure is earnestly sought.



NIKO RAUL S.J. DAZA

Representative, 1st District of Northern Samar



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AN ACT

STRENGTHENING BENEFICIARY IDENTIFICATION AND TARGETING MECHANISMS, INCLUSION OF A FOOD AND NUTRITION GRANT AND AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11310, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4Ps)

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the “Food and Nutrition Grant Through the 4Ps Law of 2025.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is declared Policy of the State to promote a just, humane, and productive society that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the country, which is free from poverty and inequity. It makes this possible through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, values-based education system, and an improved quality of life for all including children. In a society that upholds human dignity, hunger and malnutrition are unacceptable and must be eradicated through a *whole-of-society* approach. It is a multi-factorial concern requiring inputs from all sectors. As such, nutrition shall be a priority of the government to be implemented by all its branches in collaboration with non-government organizations and the private sector in an integrated manner.

It shall be the State policy to:

- (1) Defend and promote the rights and welfare of children through an empowerment process where parents are educated on responsible parenthood while providing a system that ensures proper care, nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development;
- (2) Eliminate hunger and reduce all forms of malnutrition in children; and

- (3) Prioritize nutrition as both an end-goal and a means to achieve development through multi-sectoral engagement with focus on nutritionally and economically depressed areas, communities, and households.

SEC. 3. Section 6 of Republic Act No. 11310 is amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 6. Eligible Beneficiaries. – Farmers, fisherfolks, homeless families, indigenous peoples, those in the informal settler sector, **HOUSEHOLDS WITH UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN AGED ZERO (0) TO SIX (6)**, and those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, including those in areas without electricity shall be automatically included in the standardized targeting system to be conducted by the DSWD: Provided, That to be eligible for cash grants, households or families must meet the following criteria:”

- “a) Classified as poor and near-poor based on the Standardized Targeting System and the poverty threshold issued by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) at the time of selection;”
- “b) Have members who are aged zero (0) to eighteen (18) years old or have members who are pregnant at the time of registration; and”
- “c) Willing to comply with the conditions specified by this Act.”

SEC. 4. Section 7 of the same Act is amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 7. Conditional Cash Transfer to Beneficiaries. – The Advisory Council shall determine the amount of conditional cash transfer to beneficiaries with the following schemes:”

- “a) Conditional cash transfer grant per child enrolled in day care and elementary programs shall not be lower than Three Hundred Pesos (PhP 300.00) per month per child for a maximum of ten (10) months per year;”
- “b) Conditional cash transfer grant per child enrolled in junior high school shall not be lower than Five Hundred Pesos (PhP 500.00) per month per child for a maximum of ten (10) months per year;”
- “c) Conditional cash transfer grant per child enrolled in senior high school shall not be lower than Seven Hundred Pesos (PhP 700.00) per month per child for a maximum of ten (10) months per year;”
- “d) Health grant shall not be lower than Seven Hundred Fifty Pesos (PhP 750.00) per month for a maximum of twelve (12) months per year; **AND**”
- “e) **FOOD AND NUTRITION GRANT SHALL NOT BE LOWER THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 1,000.00) PER MONTH FOR A MAXIMUM OF TWELVE (12) MONTHS PER YEAR.**”

“The health and food and nutrition grant components aim to promote healthy practices and family development, improve the health status of pregnant and post-partum mothers, infants and young children, and increase the use of health services by the household-beneficiary.”

“THE FOOD AND NUTRITION GRANT AIMS TO ADDRESS IF NOT ERADICATE MALNUTRITION BY EMPOWERING POOR HOUSEHOLDS TO PURCHASE HEALTHY AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD AS PRESCRIBED IN THE *PINGGANG PINOY* BASED ON KUMAINMENT OR NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR FILIPINOS (OR ANY FUTURE GUIDELINES THAT MAY BE ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL.”

“AN APPROPRIATE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM SHALL BE ESTABLISHED BY DSWD AND RELEVANT AGENCIES SUCH AS THE NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL. TO ENSURE THAT THE FOOD AND NUTRITION GRANT IS USED FOR THE PURPOSE AS PROVIDED FOR IN THIS LAW, DSWD MAY ISSUE IT IN THE FORM OF FOOD VOUCHER OR SIMILAR FORM IN THE CORRESPONDING AMOUNT, UNLESS CASH IS STILL OBSERVED TO BE THE MORE EFFICIENT WAY OF DISTRIBUTION.”

SEC. 5. Section 11 of the same Act is amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 11. Conditions for Entitlement. – ALL QUALIFIED HOUSEHOLDS-BENEFICIARIES CLASSIFIED AS FOOD POOR BASED ON THE SUBSISTENCE THRESHOLD ISSUED BY THE PSA AT THE TIME OF THE SELECTION SHALL BE PRIORITIZED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS OF BENEFICIARIES. All qualified household-beneficiaries shall comply with all of the following conditions as a requirement for continued program eligibility:”

“(a) Pregnant women must avail of pre-natal services, give birth in a health facility attended by a skilled health professional, and receive post-partum care and post-natal care for her newborn;”

“(b) Children zero (0) to (5) must receive regular preventive health and nutrition services including check-up and vaccinations;”

“(c) CHILDREN WHO ARE UNDERNOURISHED MUST UNDERGO MONTHLY MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF NUTRITION INDICATORS AS FACILITATED BY RESPECTIVE BARANGAY NUTRITION SCHOLARS OR LOCAL HEALTH UNITS;”

“d) THE FOOD AND NUTRITION GRANT IS A FIXED AMOUNT AND DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN THE HOUSEHOLD;”

“e) Children one (1) to fourteen (14) years old must avail of deworming pills at least twice a year;”

“f) Children three (3) to four (4) years old must attend day care or pre-school classes at least eighty-five percent (85%) of the time;”

“g) Children five (5) to eighteen (18) years old must attend elementary or secondary classes at least eighty-five percent (85%) of their time; and”

“h) At least one (1) responsible person must attend family development sessions conducted by the DSWD, at least once a month.”

“Any or all conditions for entitlement may be suspended by the DSWD Secretary during times of calamities, war, and armed conflicts.”

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against those authorized in the current and subsequent General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within three (3) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD shall, in coordination with appropriate government departments and agencies, revise the rules and regulations for Republic Act No. 11310 to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed, amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,