

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3834**

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Introduced by Representative **TYRONE D AGABAS**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill which seeks to create the "Rural Employment Assistance Program" for the benefit of qualified head of the family, or single adult member of poor households in the rural areas has already been approved by the House of Representatives on its 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading in the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress. So as to equitably render meaningful the definition of social justice in the rural areas, it is but imperative to refile the said bill to economically empower the poor and the marginalized in the countryside.

Section 1, Article 13 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides, "The Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measure that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good."

It includes the commitment to create economic opportunities for the poor through effective legislative measures. As defined under this act, the term "poor" refers to individuals and families whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life, or those who have been identified as poor by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction. A "rural area" refers to a barangay with at least fifty percent (50%) land area devoted to agriculture, timberland, forest and/or pasture land as determined by the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of the concerned local government unit. Through the Rural Employment Assistance Program, temporary employment will be given to qualified individuals.

Approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal stroke with a loop at the end and a vertical stroke crossing it.

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**AN ACT**

**PROVIDING FOR A RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Rural  
2 Employment Assistance Program Act".

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the declared policy of the  
4 State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure  
5 the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people  
6 from poverty through policies that provide adequate social  
7 services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and  
8 an improved quality of life for all. Towards this ends, the State  
9 shall provide employment assistance to a qualified head of a  
10 family or single adult member of poor households in rural areas  
11 identified by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty  
12 Reduction (NHTS-PR) of the Department of Social Welfare and  
13 Development (DSWD).

14 **SEC. 3. Rural Employment Assistance Program.** - There is  
15 hereby created a Rural Employment Assistance Program (REAP),  
16 which shall provide temporary employment to every qualified head  
17 of a family or single adult member of a poor family in rural areas  
18 who volunteers to do unskilled labor for a minimum of forty five  
19 (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in a calendar year.

20

21



22           **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

23           (a) Poor refers to individuals and families whose income fall  
24 below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or  
25 cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum  
26 basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other  
27 essential amenities of life, or those who have been identified as  
28 poor by the NHTS-PR;

29           (b) Rural area refers to any barangay with at least fifty percent  
30 (50%) land area devoted to agriculture, timberland, forest and/or  
31 pasture land as determined by the Comprehensive Land Use plan  
32 of the concerned local government unit (LGU); and

33           (c) Unskilled labor refers to a segment of the workforce  
34 associated with a limited skill set or minimal economic value for  
35 the work performed. It is generally characterized by the lower  
36 educational attainment, such as a high school diploma, General  
37 Equivalency Diploma (GED) or lack thereof, and typically results  
38 in lower wages.

39           **SEC. 5. Qualifications for Availment of Employment**  
40 **Assistance.** – The DSWD, in close coordination with the LGUs and  
41 other concerned government agencies, shall conduct an  
42 assessment of all poor individuals and families in rural areas who  
43 signify interest in undertaking work as unskilled labor to  
44 determine eligibility in availing of the employment assistance  
45 program. It shall take the lead in the implementation of the REAP  
46 along project identification, implementation and monitoring of the  
47 works and activities.

48           Employment activities for this purpose shall be designed to  
49 mobilize eligible individuals and families to finish a project in a  
50 given period. These projects may include the following:

51           (a) Development, rebuilding/rehabilitation of agri-based  
52 livelihood assets destroyed or lost due to natural disasters such as  
53 desilting of irrigation canals, development of paddy dikes, and  
54 rehabilitation of water impounding dams;

55           (b) Development or rehabilitation of common service facilities,  
56 which are being shared and used by poor families as production  
57 or consolidation centers like postharvest facilities, and public  
58 markets;

59           (c) Development or rehabilitation of common service facilities,  
60 up access to areas necessary to transport rural products such as  
61 construction of farm to market roads and bridges; and

62 (d) Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures  
63 such as mangrove planting and rehabilitation, tree planting and  
64 similar activities.

65  
66 **SEC. 6. Rate of Assistance.** – Every person qualified under  
67 this Program shall be entitled to receive compensation for each  
68 day of work employment assistance equal to the applicable  
69 minimum wage set by the concerned Regional Tripartite Wage and  
70 Productivity Board (RTWPB).

71  
72 **SEC. 7. Appropriations.** – The Secretary of Social Welfare and  
73 Development shall be include in the DSWD's program the  
74 implementation of this Act, the initial funding of which shall be  
75 charged against the current year's appropriations of the DSWD.  
76 Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continued  
77 implementation shall be included in the annual General  
78 Appropriations Act.

79  
80 In addition, the DSWD may accept the donation, contributions  
81 or grants from various sources for the implementation of the  
82 REAP.

83  
84 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety  
85 (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the DSWD  
86 shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Development of  
87 the Interior and Local Government, issue the necessary rules and  
88 regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

89  
90 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is  
91 declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any  
92 provision not affected hereby shall remain in full force and effect.

93  
94 **SEC. 10. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)  
95 days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any  
96 newspaper of general circulation.

97  
98 Approved,