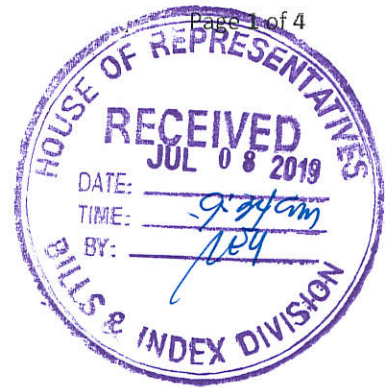


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 1552



**Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES ALFREDO A. GARBIN, Jr. and
ELIZALDY S. CO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to create the Rural Employment Assistance Program for the benefit of qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households in the rural areas and appropriating funds therefor.

This proposed measure is patterned after the National Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 which was enacted by the Parliament of India. Under the National Employment Guarantee Act of India, every household whose adult member volunteered to do unskilled manual work is guaranteed employment of not less than one hundred (100) days in every year. Under that same law, if the adult member is not provided with employment within fifteen (15) days from receipt of his application for employment, the adult member shall be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.

The Rural Employment Assistance Program, however, is aimed at providing temporary employment to qualified heads of family or single adult members of poor households who volunteer to do unskilled manual work in rural areas where they reside. The Rural Employment Assistance Program is similar to the Cash for Work Program, one of the sustainable livelihood programs of the DSWD. Under this bill, the program will be implemented by the DSWD in coordination with the local government units (LGUs) for a period of five years. The DSWD will take charge of evaluating the qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households can be employed. The qualified head of family or single adult member of poor households is entitled to a wage rate of not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the prevailing minimum wage set by the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

Suffice it to say, this Bill is envisioned to arrest the growing unemployment rate in the country which is the highest in the ASEAN region. But above anything, it is designed to make our rural poor productive in order for them to uplift their lives and their families as well as to spur economic growth in their communities.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is highly recommended.


ALFREDO A. GARBIN, Jr


ELIZALDY S. CO

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HOUSE BILL No. 1552

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES ALFREDO A. GARBIN, Jr. and
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**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 “*Rural Employment Assistance Program Act.*”

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

SEC. 3. *Rural Employment Assistance Program.* – The DSWD shall implement the Rural Employment Assistance Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, in coordination with local government units. The Program shall provide temporary employment to every qualified head of family or single adult member of poor families in rural areas who volunteer/s to do unskilled manual work for a minimum of forty-five (45) days but not more than ninety (90) days in every calendar year.

Rural areas refer to barangays which have population size of less than two thousand five hundred (2,500). Barangays which do not have an establishment with

1 twenty-five (25) or more employees, or five (5) or more establishments with a minimum
2 of ten (10) employees, or five (5) or more facilities within the two kilometer radius from
3 the barangay hall, are also classified as rural areas.

4 SEC. 4. **Assessment to Determine Qualification for Availment of**
5 **Employment Assistance.** – The DSWD, in close coordination with the local government
6 units and other concerned government agencies, shall conduct an assessment of all poor
7 individuals and families in rural areas who signified interest to do unskilled labor to
8 determine eligibility in availing of the employment assistance program.

9 For the purpose of this act, the poor shall refer to individuals and families whose
10 income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the government and/or cannot
11 afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health,
12 education, housing and other essential amenities of life or those who have been identified
13 as poor by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR).

14 SEC. 5. **Rate of Assistance.** – Every qualified head of family or single adult
15 member of a poor family in the rural areas who qualified under the Program shall be
16 entitled to receive for each day of work an employment assistance equal to the applicable
17 minimum wage set by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board in the region.
18 They shall also be entitled to the payment mandatory social security dues such as
19 Philhealth, Pag-ibig and Social Security System (SSS).

20 SEC. 6. **Types of Works and Activities.** – The DSWD, in coordination with the
21 local government units and other concerned government agencies, shall take the lead in
22 the implementation of the rural employment assistance program along project
23 identification, implementation and monitoring of the works and activities. The works and
24 activities for this purpose are classified as activities that will mobilize eligible poor
25 individuals and families to finish a project in a given period. These projects may include,
26 but are not limited to, the following:

27 a. Development, re-building/rehabilitation of agri-based livelihood assets
28 destroyed or lost due to natural disasters (e.g. desilting of irrigation canals, development
29 of paddy dikes, rehabilitation of water impounding, among others)

b. Rehabilitation and or development of common service facilities, which are being shared and used by poor families as production or consolidation centers/units (e.g. post-harvest facilities, public markets etc.)

c. Development or rehabilitation of physical assets to open up access to natural assets where the former is necessary to bring out the products of poor families to the market (e.g. farm to market road, slope protection, bridges, among others)

d. Protection of productive assets through mitigation measures such as mangrove planting/rehabilitation, tree planting and the likes.

SEC. 7. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the implementation of the rural employment assistance program shall be included in the budget of the DSWD in the annual general appropriations act.

The DSWD may also get funds, donations and other forms of financial support from foreign and local persons, institutions and governments for the implementation of rural employment assistance program.

SEC. 8. Employment Assistance and Skills Training Fund (EASTF). There is hereby created an Employment Assistance and Skills Training Fund (EASTF) which shall be administered by the DSWD. The EASTF shall be exclusively for the benefit of the qualified head of family or single adult member of poor family in the rural areas who availed of the Program.

The EASTF shall be used to pay the wages and skills training programs of qualified head/s of families or single adult member/s of the poor families in rural areas who availed of the Program.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Secretary of the Social Welfare and Development shall, in Consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and Local Government, issue the Necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

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

Approved.