

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

18th Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5520



Introduced by Representative EVELINA G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Grounded on the Constitutional prescription that the "State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them,"¹ this bill seeks to specifically address the monitoring and implementation of food safety standards in all schools with a school canteen or any other eatery that caters food to students. Consequently, it mandates the employment of Home Economics, or other similar and analogous courses or degrees, graduates in schools to exact such accountability from school canteen owners and operators in the country.

Food safety as a policy issue in schools cannot be understated, especially in cases where food sold or made available in schools results in food poisoning and unhealthy physical and mental wellbeing.

Just recently, or in July this year, forty (40) Junior High School students reportedly suffered from food poisoning prompting the local government to suspend classes and the Department of Education (DepEd) to reiterate stricter food safety monitoring pursuant to its Department Order (DO) No. 8, series of 2007.²

While it is true that Republic Act (RA) No. 10611 or the Food Safety Act of 2013 subsists, special focus on schools is strongly proposed. Needless to state, schools are the primary learning centers of our youth where they are molded both physically and mentally. Local Government Units (LGUs) exclusively tasked to monitor and implement food safety standards in school canteens require assistance in deference to the already numerous tasks on local governance.

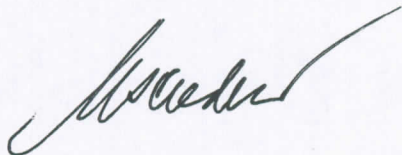
It is submitted that to exact adherence to the government's policy on food safety standards, especially in school canteens, it is proposed that RA No. 10611 be

¹ Section 15, Article II, Constitution.

² DepEd pushes for stricter food safety standards in school canteens by Merlina Hernando-Malipot, 13 July 2019, Manila Bulletin.

amended with a provision solely intended to school canteens by mandating the employment of Home Economics, or other related and analogous courses, graduates in schools to ensure not only the compliance but monitoring as well of statutorily mandated food safety standards.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. A. M. A.', written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14 OF REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 10611

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

1 **Section 1.** Section 14, paragraph (a) of Republic Act (RA) No. 10611 is hereby
2 amended to read as follows:

3 “SEC. 14. *Specific Responsibilities of Food Business Operators.* – Food
4 business operators shall have the following responsibilities under this
5 Act:

6 (a) Food business operators shall be knowledgeable of the specific
7 requirements of food law relevant, to their activities in the food supply
8 chain and the procedures adopted by relevant government agencies
9 that implement the law. They shall adopt, apply and be well informed
10 of codes and principles for good practices. Micro and small industries
11 shall be assisted to facilitate their adoption of such practices. SCHOOL
12 CANTEENS SHALL EMPLOY THE SERVICES OF HOME
13 ECONOMICS, OR OTHER RELATED AND ANALOGOUS COURSES,
14 GRADUATES TO ENSURE MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE OF
15 FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS WHERE THEY
16 OPERATE;”

17 **Section 2. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Commission on
18 Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education in coordination with
19 the Department of Health shall promulgate the corresponding implementing rules
20 and regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days from the date of its effectivity.

1 **Section 3. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*,
3 whichever comes first.

4 *Approved,*

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