

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1377

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

AN ACT PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE DEPENDENTS OF FARMERS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 2012 Bureau of Agricultural Statistics show that the agricultural sector employs an estimated 12 million people, making up 33 percent of the country's labor force. About 70 percent of the rural poor are farmers and fishermen.

It is unfortunate that the government investment in the sector was only 4 percent of the national budget notwithstanding its contribution of about 11 percent to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2011 where the total government spending on agriculture was almost 24 percent lower than the previous year.

According to the experts, the weak government policies and programs, an excessive' reliance on agricultural imports, and corruption, have taken their toll on the agricultural sector. On the side of education, the average level of education of a farmer is grade five.

This measure, which was originally filed by Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, aims to help the agricultural sector by providing social services to dependents of farmers as a gesture of recognition to their sacrifices and a statement to the agricultural sector that the State is serious in providing them with adequate support. It also aims to encourage their children to continue farming and help in the livelihood of the family.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

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AN ACT PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE DEPENDENTS OF FARMERS

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 "Social Services for Farmers' Dependents Act."

SEC. 2. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, the term "Farming" or "agriculture" shall include farming in all of its branches and the cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying, the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land, the raising of livestock including horses, the keeping of horses as a commercial enterprise, the keeping and raising of poultry, swine, cattle and other domesticated animals used for food purposes, bees, fur-bearing animals, and any forestry or lumbering operations, performed by a farmer, who is hereby defined as one engaged in agriculture or farming as herein defined, or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with such farming operations, including preparations for market, delivery to storage or to market or to carriers for transportation to market.

A "dependent" means a legitimate, illegitimate or legally adopted child chiefly dependent upon and living with the taxpayer if such dependent is not more than twenty-one (21) years of age, unmarried and not gainfully employed or if such dependent, regardless of age, is incapable of self-support because of mental or physical defect.

SEC. 3. *Farmers' Dependents Social Services Program.* - There shall be created a Farmers' Dependents Social Services Program which shall be in charge of the delivery of social services to the dependents of farmers and farm workers.

SEC. 4. *Farmers' Dependents Social Services Program Office.* - There is hereby created an Office in the Department of Agriculture that shall be responsible for the implementation of the Farmers' Dependents Social Services Program in Section 4 of this Act. It shall be in charge of the delivery of the following:

(a) Credit facilities during times of natural such as typhoons, drought, and other similar events;

(b) Counseling and information dissemination on available healthcare for dependents;

(c) Coordinate with the Department of Social Welfare and Development in drawing and implementing plans for the promotion of the welfare of the dependents of

farmers, particularly those who belong to the poorest of the poor;

(d) Prepare a report on the dependents of farmers who are in most need of assistance and to draw up a financial assistance package to be drawn from private contributors;

(e) Conduct seminars, trainings, and other related activities.

SEC. 5. *Funding.* - The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current fiscal year's appropriation of the Department of Agriculture. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the DA under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Incentives.* - In order to encourage private sector participation, all expenses incurred by any private individual, corporation, or a non-governmental organization, in the establishment of facilities or in the performance of services, including donations, which are consistent with the declared policies of this Act, shall be considered as allowable deductions from the gross income as defined under the National Internal Revenue Code, as amended.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall jointly issue the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act within thirty (30) days from its date of effectivity.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,