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SENATE
Senate Joint Resolution No. 4

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

JOINT RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG), DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (DND), DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOTR), AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR), IN COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA), TO DIRECTLY BUY BACK PALAY OF THE LOCAL FARMERS FOR THE RICE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the government continues to pursue its vision of food security for all Filipinos by allotting P 137.1 billion for agriculture and agrarian reform to enhance agricultural productivity, support poor farmers and fisher folk, and strengthen the climate resilience communities, among others;

WHEREAS, on February 2019, Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11203 entitled, "*An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice, and For Other Purposes*" was enacted to help support the local rice industry specifically by creating a "Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund" to be allocated and disbursed, as follows: (a) Rice Farm Machineries and Equipment, (b) Rice Seed Development, Propagation, and Promotion, (c) Expanded Rice Credit Assistance, and Rice Extension Services;

WHEREAS, despite the efforts made by the government to protect the local rice industry, large stocks of imported rice have depressed the buying price of local *palay* to levels way below the cost production;

WHEREAS, to provide immediate support and assistance to the local rice industry, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has ordered the National Food Authority (NFA) to expend their budget of P 7 billion for procuring *palay* or unhusked rice from local farmers;

WHEREAS, the 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA) provides a total allocation of P 33.9 billion for rice subsidies, the largest of which is given to the beneficiaries of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under the "*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)*," that can herewith be utilized in coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the NFA, to buy *palay* directly from local farmers;

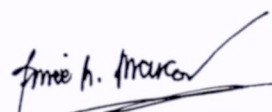
WHEREAS, the remaining allocations of P 2.89 billion are allotted to the rice subsidy programs for military uniformed personnel such as the provision of twenty (20) kilos of rice per month, in the form of financial assistance, to the uniformed personnel of the Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force, Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, and the Bureau of Fire Protection;

WHEREAS, under Section 8 of Republic Act No. 11203 entitled, "*An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice, and For Other Purposes*," the NFA is tasked to buy *palay* from local farmers "*all-year-round*" for the maintenance of a rice buffer stock and can be assigned to undertake direct local buying on behalf of the departments;

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, VOTING SEPARATELY, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to urge the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Transportation (DOTr), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the National Food Authority (NFA) and the Department

of Agriculture (DA), to directly buy back *palay* of the local farmers for the Rice Subsidy Program.

Adopted,


IMEE R. MARCOS