

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 9161



Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A year after the declaration of national emergency due to COVID-19, it seems that the country is back to square one. Spikes in the daily cases have been observed particularly in the National Capital Region (NCR), Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal. These areas were ordered to revert to Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), the strictest form among the quarantine restrictions, starting on March 29, 2021 until April 4, 2021.

ECQ seems necessary to contain the spread of the virus. However, the country cannot always rely on measures that merely restrict the mobility of people. Programs that complement the effectiveness of mobility restrictions should also come to play. Financial aid should be given to the most needy and most vulnerable sectors of the society.

A declaration of ECQ is particularly hard-hitting to workers in the informal sector and employees in a "no-work-no-pay" arrangement who will not have a choice but to absent themselves from work due to temporary closure of certain establishments. While stoppage of work seems convenient for some, it is not so for those who rely on their daily income for sustenance.

Thus, this bill proposes the distribution of a third tranche of the Social Amelioration Program (SAP), similar to that disbursed under Republic Act No. 11460, otherwise known as the "Bayanihan To Heal As One Act".

Since there are reports that some of the supposed beneficiaries of SAP have not yet received their allocation for the second tranche, this bill also humbly recommends that the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) be mandated to report to Congress all disbursements relating to SAP including those that are not yet disbursed for any reason.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A THIRD TRANCHE OF THE SOCIAL AMELIORATION
PROGRAM (SAP) 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 referred to as the “Social Amelioration Program (SAP) Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to immediately mobilize assistance in the provision of basic necessities to families and individuals affected by the imposition of Community Quarantine, especially indigents and their families. Towards this end, the State must undertake a program for recovery and rehabilitation, including a social amelioration program which will provide a temporary safety net to the most vulnerable sectors.

SEC. 3. *Emergency Subsidy.* – An emergency subsidy to around eighteen (18) million low income households is hereby granted, *Provided*, That the subsidy shall amount to a one-time payment of a minimum of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00) to a maximum of Eight Thousand Pesos (Php8,000.00); *Provided, further*, That the subsidy shall be computed based on the prevailing regional minimum wage rates; *Provided, finally*, That the subsidy received from the current conditional cash transfer program and rice subsidy shall be taken into consideration in the computation of the emergency subsidy as provided for in this Act.

SEC. 4. *Report to Congress.* – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is hereby mandated to report to Congress regarding all disbursements relating to SAP. The report shall include the amount and corresponding utilization of the funds used, as well as those unused for any justified reason.

SEC. 5. *Simultaneous release of Second and Third Tranches.* – If for any reason, a qualified beneficiary has not yet received his or her allocation for the second tranche of SAP, the DSWD is mandated to simultaneously release the second and third tranches to the beneficiary.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations for the DSWD under the current General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, in coordination with other relevant government agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

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 the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,