Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 2323

Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE and FERDINAND R. GAITE,
GABRIELA Women’s Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION
URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH THE COMMITTEE
ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO INVESTIGATE,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE UTILIZATION OF THE RICE
COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT FUND (RCEF) AND RICE IMPORT
DUTIES COLLECTION SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF REPUBLIC ACT 11203

WHEREAS, rice farmers are complaining of steadily declining palay (unhusked rice) prices with
prices as low as P10 per kilo to a prevailing average price of P12 to P15 per kilo even in rice-
producing provinces of Pangasinan, Tarlac, Mindoro Occidental, Zamboanga Sibugay, Davao Del
Norte and South Cotabato, leaving farmers bankrupt and in debt;

WHEREAS, according to the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), the drop in the palay prices is
due to the following: surge in cheap and undervalued imports; increased undervaluation of
imports; reduction in non-ASEAN tariffs to 35% starting June 2021 by virtue of EO 135;
speculation over future supply surplus situation; rainy weather; lack of post-harvest facilities;
limited buying capacity of the NFA and local government units; and stringent quality standards;

WHEREAS, even the National Food Authority (NFA) agrees with the noticeable decline in palay
prices as stakeholders raise urgent concerns that palay prices are falling way below the actual
production cost of P16 per kilo;

WHEREAS, farmers and consumers assert that such situation of negligible palay prices worsened
since the implementation of RA 11203 or the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) in 2019;

WHEREAS, RA 11203 or RTL mandated the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF)
which sets aside P10 billion annually supposedly to modernize rice farms and upgrade Filipino
farmers’ know-how and access to seed and credit;

WHEREAS, the intent of the law is to make domestic farmers more competitive but up to now,
farmers are still in need of farm input support, dryers, post-harvest facilities, and other necessary
assistance to genuinely develop the local rice industry and alleviate their plight and livelihood;

WHEREAS, rice import duties are collected to support the RCEF and the year-to-date rice tariffs
as of October 2021 has reached P14.3-billion. In 2020, the government collected P15.47 billion in rice tariffs. Despite this, rice farmers are still reeling from lack of aid and assistance from the government;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to thoroughly probe how the RCEF and rice import duties collections since 2019 are being utilized for the benefit of the country’s rice farmers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Agriculture and Food, conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the utilization of RCEF and rice import duties collection since the enactment of RA 11203.

Adopted,

REP. BUTEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
GABRIELA Women’s Party

REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist

REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. FRANCIS L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Partylist