A JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET OF FIFTEEN BILLION PESOS (P15,000,000,000) TO BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) AND DIRECTING THE LATTER TO EXCLUSIVELY USE THE AMOUNT TO URGENTLY PROCUREMENT AT LEAST 750,000 METRIC TONS OF PALAY FROM LOCAL FARMERS AT THE FARM GATE PRICE OF TWENTY PESOS (P20) PER KILOGRAM, AND SELL THE NFA RICE AT TWENTY SEVEN PESOS (P27) PER KILOGRAM IN ORDER TO EASE THE DIRE IMPACTS OF THE RICE LIBERALIZATION AND TARIFFICATION LAW
WHEREAS, in line with the Philippine government’s compliance to the neoliberal policy prescription of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to shift from quantitative restrictions to tariffs, President Rodrigo Duterte signed into law on February 14, 2019 Republic Act No. 11203 otherwise known as "An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Restriction on Rice, and for Other Purposes" or the Rice Liberalization and Tarification Act;

WHEREAS, RA 11203 opened the floodgates for the massive importation of rice, leading to a sharp decline in palay prices and consequently into huge losses in the income of farmers. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) indicate that the average farm gate price of palay has hit its lowest in more than two years, as cheap imported rice surpassed 1.3 million metric tons during the first half of 2019 under the Rice Liberalization and Tarification Law;

WHEREAS, estimates from Bantay Bigas and farmers’ groups point to a dismal crash in palay prices, with some regions such as Central Luzon reporting farmgate price levels at P11 per kilo or even P7 in some areas; Farmgate price of palay is seen to further drop during the coming months;

WHEREAS, Filipino farmers have lost around P40 billion in just the first half of the 2019 due to the huge drop in the price of palay, according to the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF);

WHEREAS, the One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000) allocated for Expanded Rice Credit Assistance under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) as part of Rice Liberalization and Tarification Law is certainly not enough to aid our rice farmers, notwithstanding the fact that it requires minimum collateral and imposes minimum interest rates;
WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) Expanded Survival and Recovery Assistance Program for Rice Farmers (SURE Aid) amounting to P1.5 billion will only provide each farmer P15,000 in the form of zero-interest loans, and will only cover 100,000 rice farmers out of the total estimated 2.4 million rice farmers;

WHEREAS, the National Food Authority (NFA) can only purchase 350,000 metric tons or 7 million sacks of palay from local farmers at P20 per kilo farm gate price through its current P7-billion budget for buffer stocking for 2019;

WHEREAS, the country is once again entering the harvest season of the lean second cropping. The NFA must be refueled with adequate funds so that it can procure a substantial portion from the coming harvest;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress assembled, that a supplemental budget of fifteen billions pesos (P15,000,000,000.00) be immediately released to the National Food Authority as supplemental budget for the exclusive and urgent procurement of at least 750,000 metric tons of palay from local farmers at the farm gate price of twenty pesos (P20) per kilogram, and sell the NFA rice at twenty seven pesos (P27) per kilogram in order to ease the dire impacts of the Rice Liberalization and Tariffication Law.

Adopted,

ARLENE D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women’s Party

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Bayan Muna Partylist

EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
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FERDINAND R. GAITE
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SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist
MANIFESTO OF SUPPORT

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IRENE PAULO KALINCO PARTY-LIST

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YASER ALOSTO BALINDONIC

RASHIDIN MATBA
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TOFF DE VENECIA
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<td>Marie Enverga</td>
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<td>Josephine Ramirez Santolino</td>
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<td>Cheryl de loso-Montalla</td>
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**Signature**

Loren Legarda
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