

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **9185**



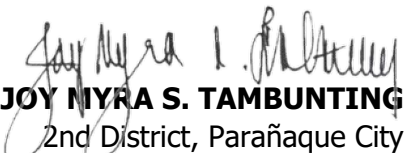
Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The COVID-19 pandemic has massively affected the lives of the people and the country's economy. At the onset of the pandemic, numerous individuals have lost access to their livelihood due to various travel restrictions and strict health protocols implemented in the country. Considering the fact that the Philippines has had one of the longest lockdowns in the world and as of writing, is still on-going, it is incumbent upon the State to establish mechanisms to ensure that the welfare of the public especially the vulnerable population is accounted for.

At present, there is no single cohesive action plan in place to cushion to the blow brought about by the pandemic to our people's everyday life. This measure aims to establish mechanisms to achieve objectives that are not addressed by the existing laws in cognizance of the adverse impact of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic and other natural calamities to the Philippine economy and society. This measure aims to completely amend and supplement all the short-term and long-term courses of action of different governmental sectors so as to provide an institutional approach to this pandemic.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.


REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

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Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

AN ACT
AUGMENTING THE STIMULUS PACKAGE FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
INTERVENTIONS AND PROVIDING MECHANISMS TO STRENGTHENING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAME, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act may be known as the “Expanded Stimulus Package Act of 2021.”

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty, particularly in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters, through policies that provide adequate social services, and promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.

Towards this end, the State shall establish mechanisms to achieve objectives that are not addressed by the existing laws in cognizance of the adverse impact of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic and other natural calamities to the Philippine economy and society.

Sec. 3. COVID-19 Response and Recovery Interventions. – In cognizance with the implementation of the Republic Act No. 11494 and Republic Act No. 11525, the following shall be undertaken and implemented as additional COVID-19 response and recovery interventions:

- (1) Direct stimulus fund of Five thousand pesos (P5,000) to Eight thousand pesos (P8,000) to any of the following:
 - a. Affected “low-income individual and households” individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life, whether or not they reside in areas under granular lockdown;

- b. Households with one or more household members has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship during or due, directly or indirectly, to the coronavirus pandemic such as being displaced from work;
 - c. Households with one or more household members who can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and to
 - d. Family-based livelihood enterprises employing one (1) to five (5) workers.
- (2) Homelessness Assistance. The homeless, at-risk of homelessness, those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault or human trafficking shall be entitled with the following benefits:
- a. Tenant-based rental assistance to be facilitated by the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD);
 - b. Augmented funding for affordable housing;
 - c. Priority in government's socialized housing projects.
- (3) Wage or non-wage subsidies:
- a. Transfers directly paid to the Social Security System (SSS) to subsidize payment of the employee share of premium contributions for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs);
 - b. Transfers to the SSS to ensure expanded sick leaves for workers who contract COVID-19;
 - c. Subsidies for COVID-19 testing of workers in micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); and
 - d. Other forms of subsidies that have the effect of increasing deployment of vulnerable workers or re-employment of displaced workers.
- (4) Provision for capacity building to critically impacted sectors that are strategic for economic growth, as determined by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC); and
- (5) Provision for internet allowances to teachers and students in primary, secondary, and tertiary public schools.

Sec. 4. Regularization of MSMEs. – To ensure that MSMEs are able to avail of programs, the Commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) shall waive registration and other related fees of MSMEs for the duration of the effectivity of this Act and if necessary, provide accommodation for the registration process and compliance of MSMEs.

The DTI Secretary shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to provide special accommodation for the registration and compliance with regulatory requirements of MSMEs, including those registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Local government units (LGUs) shall be encouraged by the DILG and the Department of Finance-Bureau of Local Government Finance (DOF-BLGF) to waive similar local registration and processing fees.

The Negosyo Centers under the DTI shall coordinate with national and local government agencies and LGUs to ensure the widest dissemination of information and benefits under this program, as well as other programs offered by sectors, donor agencies, and bilateral partners.

Sec. 5. Credit Mediation and Restructuring Service. – To ensure that MSMEs are able to fulfill obligations under more favorable terms of credit, to strengthen the liquidity and financial position thereof, and to expedite the country's economic recovery, there shall be created a Credit Mediation and Restructuring Service (CMRS), through the Negosyo Centers or any other business assistance office of the LGU, to act as credit advisers and mediators between MSMEs and the banks and lending institutions, and assist MSMEs in obtaining favorable credit and loan terms from the banks and lending institutions.

The CMRS shall: (i) ensure that an MSME is given sound financial advice on, among others, the proposed borrowing, the risks involved, and the financial position and operation of the relevant MSME; (ii) assist in evaluation of the financing; (iii) oversee the negotiation process until terms of financing are agreed upon; and (iv) ensure that an MSME is given better access to financing and to a fair and transparent borrowing and appeals process.

The Negosyo Centers shall coordinate with LCDs, financial institutions and government agencies to ensure the widest dissemination of information and benefits under this program.

The DTI Secretary, together with the head of private sector associations representing MSMEs and financial institutions, shall jointly issue the implementing rules and regulations of this Section within ten (10) days from the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 6. Payment Schedule. –

- (1) In General. The eligible grantees under Section 3 (1) of this Act shall be paid not less than 50 percent of each such eligible grantee's total allocation provided under Section 3 (I) of this Act within 60 days of enactment of this Act.
- (2) Subsequent Payments. Eligible grantees referred to in the preceding section shall be paid additional amounts in tranches up to the full amount of each such eligible grantee's total allocation before the expiration of the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 7. Appropriations. – In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated for fiscal year 2021 to remain available until the full implementation of this, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated Act:

- a) One hundred billion pesos (P100,000,000,000.00) for additional social amelioration to affected low-income individuals and households and the homeless;
- b) One hundred billion pesos (P100 000,000,000.00) for worker subsidies;
- c) One hundred billion pesos (P100 000,000,000.00) for the capacity building of critically impacted sectors;
- d) Thirty billion pesos (30,000,000,000.00) for assistance to displaced workers;
- e) Three billion pesos (3,000,000,000.00) for internet allowances for DepEd K-12 teachers and students; and

- f) Two billion pesos (2,000,000,000.00) for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for internet allowances for tertiary level teachers and students.

Sec. 8. Sources of funds. – Such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act; Provided, That funds for the herein authorized programs and projects shall be sourced primarily from the unprogrammed funds and savings realized from modified, realigned or reprogrammed allocations for operational expense of any government agency or instrumentality under the Executive Department.

Sec. 9. Reportorial Requirement And Creation Of An Oversight Committee. – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the President shall submit monthly report on every first Monday of the month to Congress and to the Commission on Audit (COA) of all acts performed pursuant to this Act during the immediately preceding month including a report on the targets and actual accomplishments of government programs, plans, and efforts relative to the COVID-19 pandemic and other relevant information as may be required by Congress and COA. The terms and conditions of any loan entered into by the government to finance the programs and projects to implement this law shall likewise be included in the Report.

The implementation of such acts, orders, rules and regulations conforms with the provisions of this Act shall be determined by the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee established under the Republic Act No. 11494.

Sec. 10. Implementing Rules And Regulations. – Within five (5) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, the NTF and the GPPB shall, with prior consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government, the IATF-EID and other stakeholders, issue guidelines and applicable procurement rules, as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this Act. The non-promulgation of the rules and regulations provided under this section shall not prevent the immediate implementation of this Act upon its effectivity.

Sec. 11. Construction or Interpretation. – Nothing herein shall be construed as an impairment, restriction or modification of the provisions of the Constitution. In case the exercise of the powers herein granted conflicts with other statutes, orders, rules or regulations, the provisions of this Act shall prevail.

Sec. 12. Separability Clause. – If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 13. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are contrary or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 14. Effectivity. – Except as otherwise specifically provided herein, this Act shall be in full force and effect during the period of the state of calamity as declared under Proclamation No. 1021 dated September 16, 2020 issued by the President of the Philippines. This Act shall take effect immediately upon its publication in a newspaper of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved,