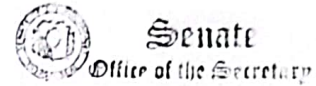


**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session**)
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24 MAR -7 AIO :24

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 956

RECEIVED BY: _____

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND AGRARIAN REFORM TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR AN EVIDENCE-BASED, CONSULTATIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11203 OR THE RICE TARRIFICATION LAW

WHEREAS, the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), under Republic Act No. 11203, mandates the liberalization of rice importation, exportation, and trading, lifting quantitative import restrictions on rice, and creating the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) with an annual appropriation of Ten Billion Pesos (Php 10,000,000,000.00) for six years;

WHEREAS, Section 13 of Republic Act No. 11203 and Rule 13.9 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) require the conduct of a review by the Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COCAFAM) at the end of the sixth year or 2025;

WHEREAS, to facilitate the conduct of this review, preliminary investigations are needed to determine its scope and identify other important standards for its effectiveness in addition to the primary benchmark of farmers' income stated in the IRR;

WHEREAS, these investigations will also aid in enhancing the implementation of the RTL in the period remaining till its expiration in 2025;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture (DA), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and the Philippine Center for Postharvest Developmental and Mechanization (PhilMech) are among the key agencies responsible for the implementation of the RTL and the disbursement of the RCEF;

WHEREAS, technical smuggling of rice has led to considerable revenue losses estimated at Php 7.2 billion in 2023, with the government losing additional tariff revenue due to undervaluation and misclassification of rice imports;

WHEREAS, in the 2024 National Expenditure Program, the NFA succeeded in

procuring only 3.38 days of the target 15-day reserve. For the same period, the Commission on Audit (COA) reported that in no given day in 2022 did the National Food Authority (NFA) have the optimum level of rice buffer requirement of 300,000 metric tons (MT) per day;

WHEREAS, the RTL and its Implementing Rules and Regulations limited buffer stock procurement only to palay from domestic sources unlike before RTL;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Monitoring Committee on the RTL and RCEF, as stipulated in the IRR, is tasked with oversight operations, while the DA is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the law's impact, ensuring the effective implementation and strategic improvement of the RTL;

WHEREAS, despite the RCEF's support and the DA's efforts, provinces such as Biliran, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Samar, Northern Samar, Eastern Samar, and the cities of Ormoc and Tacloban have experienced a decline in rice production, accounting for only 5.8% of the Philippine total for 2021 with 269,853.02 metric tons¹;

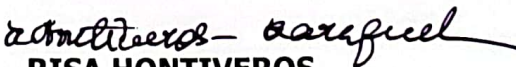
WHEREAS, only 14% of the estimated 10 million farmers and fisherfolk throughout the country are registered in the Registry of Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and 7 out of 10 farmers are unbanked according to the 2021 Financial Inclusion Survey of the Banko Sentral of the Pilipinas, thereby preventing them from availing of the benefits of RCEF and other assistance of the government;

WHEREAS, credit provided by GFIs under the RCEF continues to be disbursed in the traditional rice producing areas of Northern and Central Luzon to the detriment of the new rice producing regions of Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao, and Mindoro Province in MIMAROPA;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate lay the groundwork for an evidence-based and comprehensive review of the RTL, including the initial research and monitoring and evaluation work produced, to gather detailed information regarding PhilMech, the affected provinces, and NFA's procurement practices;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this process be consultative, and include engaging with rice stakeholders, listening to business models, and considering diverse procurement approaches to ensure the RTL fulfills its objectives of enhancing the competitiveness of the rice sector and ensuring food security for the nation.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

¹ Fighting the Good Fight: The Case of the Philippine Rice Sector.
<https://asiafoundation.org/2021/04/14/fighting-the-good-fight-the-case-of-the-philippine-rice-sector/>.