

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

SENATE

S.B. 1135

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to end the monopoly of the National Food Authority to import rice by giving the privilege to import rice to farmer organizations only. The latter are the most affected by such bringing in of rice from other countries and that the procurement funds of the NFA be utilized only to purchase locally produced palay or farmer imports for food security requirements of the country.

Moreover, this bill likewise mandates BFA to use its funds to procure locally-produced palay from our farming community in order to further motivate the farmers to increase their productivity.

The farming sector has always been at the receiving end of any rice importation as this tend to dampen or lower the price of palay resulting in no or lower income for our farmers. It is therefore an opportunity to let importation be an advantage or an opportunity for them to earn additional income.

Approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


MANNY VILLAR

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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S.B. 1135

RECEIVED

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**AN ACT
AUTHORIZING FARMER ORGANIZATIONS TO UNDERTAKE RICE
IMPORTATIONS, PROVIDING FUND ASSISTANCE AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy- It is hereby declared the policy of the State:

a. The State recognizes the need for our country to attain food security. To this end as long as we are still under quantitative restrictions, it shall authorize farmer organizations to be the sole importer of rice in the country and at the same time authorize the National Food Authority (NFA) to use its funds to purchase locally produced palay only.

b. The State recognizes the need for farmer organizations to gain training and expertise in international trade in anticipation of the lifting of restrictions on importation of agricultural products under the World Trade Organization-General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

c. The State believes that the funds of the NFA shall be used for our own farmers especially those that the need NFA service the most, e.g. upland farmers, areas of less trades, areas with less post harvest facilities, etc. provide significant impact to local farmers.

SEC. 2. Administration- The national government through the National Food Authority or an agency designated by the President of the Philippines shall:

- a. determine the volume to be imported and for this purpose, issue the implementing rules and conditions for the rice importation;
- b. give authority to import rice and transfer such authority to authorize farmer organizations only;

- c. fund allocated by NFA for its rice procurement shall be utilized in the purchase of locally produced palay and imported rice for the maintenance of its rice reserve requirements;
- d. determine the rice quality to be imported in consultation with importing farmers organization based on market requirements; and
- e. keep an inventory of rice and grain supplies for 90 days.

SEC. 3. *Determination of Authorized Farmer Organizations*- Farmer Organizations shall be accredited and certified by the NFA and the Cooperative Development Authority based on a guideline to be issued for this purpose.

The NFA will play a catalytic and supportive role recognizing the autonomy and independence of the internal affairs of the farmer organizations.

For this purpose, farmer organizations shall refer to associations whose majority owners are palay farmers.

SEC. 4. *Monitoring*- The Department of Agriculture shall oversee the national palay and rice situation to determine the amount of rice importation.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* - The NFA in consultation with concerned sectors shall issue the implementing rules and regulations within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause*- Any provision of law, executive order, decree or rules of court, which may be inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,