

## PRESS RELEASE

# House Committee on Human Rights approve 'Zero Hunger' bill

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The House Committee on Human Rights approves the 'Zero Hunger' or substitute 'Right to Adequate Food' bill of HB 3795 that aims to end hunger in the Philippines within ten years.

Quezon City, September 15, 2015 – The National Food Coalition (NFC) welcomes the decision of the House Committee on Human Rights to approve the 'Zero Hunger' bill which is now due for second reading.

The bill mandates the government to establish a clear set of policy targets to end hunger in the Philippines within ten years. It makes food not only a matter of charity but a matter of legal entitlement, adopting a comprehensive food program and using a whole-of-government approach.



After the filing of the bill in the House of Representatives in February 2014, the bill was referred to the Committee on Human Rights which immediately formed a technical working group with Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles as the chair. Three meetings of the technical working group resulted in the final substitute bill which incorporated comments submitted by the different stakeholders, and was

approved at the hearing of the Committee on Human Rights on September 15, 2015.

The hearing which was presided by the chair of the Committee on Human Rights, Rep. Guillermo Romarate Jr., was attended by representatives from different government line agencies, such as the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Health, Food and Nutrition Research Institute, Commission on Human Rights, Department of Science and Technology and the National Nutrition Council, as well as principal author of the bill, Rep. Ibarra “Barry” Gutierrez, and NFC members from the urban poor sector, peasants and indigenous people.



The key amendments of the substitute bill include clearer and comprehensive definitions of food and hunger as well as food emergencies and food blockades, and the creation of a Commission on the Right to Adequate Food as an agency attached to the Office of the President to oversee the effectiveness of the bill.

Rep. Romarate and Rep. Gutierrez were thankful for the approval of the ‘Zero Hunger’ bill which raised the important issue of tackling hunger and poverty in an agricultural based country such as the Philippines.

NFC Convener Ms. Aurea Teves also expressed her congratulations to all who have tirelessly supported the bill, particularly the co-authors Rep. Ibarra “Barry” Gutierrez, Rep. Arlene “Kaka” Bag-ao, Rep. Jose Christopher “Kit” Belmonte, former member of the House of Representatives Walden Bello, the committee chair Rep. Guillermo Romarate Jr. and chair of the technical working group Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles as well as all NFC members and supporters whose active engagement brought us one step closer toward ending hunger and poverty in the Philippines.



Pagkain, sapat dapat!

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The NFC is composed of over 80 organizations and federations with more than 10,000 members from the urban poor, peasants, indigenous peoples, fisherfolk and the middle class. The NFC has highlighted the main drivers of hunger in the

country like poverty, inequality and the resulting failure of the poor to access available resources.