

**HONORABLE MARK A. VILLAR**  
Chairperson  
Committee on Trade, Commerce, and Entrepreneurship  
Senate of the Philippines  
Pasay City

**Attn: Mr. Sherwyn B. Agub**  
Committee Secretary

Dear **Senator Villar**,

This refers to your request for a position paper on Senate Bill No. 536 entitled “Poverty Reduction Through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Act” as proposed by Senator Grace Poe. The proposed bill intends to provide incentives and benefits to promote the growth of social enterprises and to integrate the same into the overall poverty reduction of the national government.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) fully supports the proposed legislation intended to improve the quality of life of Filipinos, in line with the constitutional mandate 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 through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.<sup>1</sup>

For the further enhancement of the proposed bill, we suggest the following:

1. For the committee to review the best practices in poverty reduction and livelihood implementation within national government agencies, local government units, and established organizations.

Similarly, in the Department, we would like to highlight that we have been consistent in the implementation of our poverty reduction programs. For one, the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) continues to be the DSWD’s lead livelihood capacity building program for the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized households and communities, to help improve their socio-economic conditions through accessing and acquiring necessary assets to engage in and maintain thriving livelihoods. The SLP aims to enhance the capabilities of poor Filipino

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<sup>1</sup> Section 9, Article II, 1987 Constitution

households and individuals by strengthening their skills, competencies, abilities, and resources in accessing income generating opportunities. One of its program components is Micro-Enterprise Development for participants who exhibit potential and willingness for entrepreneurship.

In line with this, we support the Social Enterprise Capacity Building and Sustainability Program, the primary objective of which is to guarantee the viability and sustainability of social enterprises including training in social entrepreneurship development and all other activities relevant to the development of social enterprises. Likewise, we concur with the development and enhancement of a Social Enterprise Research and Development System which will equip social enterprises and support institutions with innovative and sustainable approaches to improve access of the poor to quality basic social services.

2. Under Section 4(f) on the Establishment of the Poverty Reduction Through Social Entrepreneurship Program, it is suggested to revise the principle to be all encompassing in its inclusion of different sectors. It should be read as *“uphold gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) by ensuring access to social enterprise resources.”* GEDSI refers to efforts to ensure people from all backgrounds, including women and gender diverse people, people with a disability and people facing another form of marginalization, can equitably benefit from the program.

Upon the passage of this legislation, the DSWD, as part of the Social Enterprise Development Council under Section 7 and as an implementing agency on poverty alleviation, shall incorporate the PRESENT program in our respective programs as a tool for poverty reduction. On account of these underlying commitments, the Department recommends the passage of the bill.

Thank you.



REX GATCHALIAN

Secretary

Date: MAY 31 2023