A RESOLUTION
URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO INCREASE THE FUNDS TO BE APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHEREAS, Article XIII, Section 5 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

SECTION 5. The State shall recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and landowners, as well as cooperatives, and other independent farmers' organizations to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the program, and shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services.

WHEREAS, in President Rodrigo Duterte's 2020 State of the Nation Address, he stated that the agriculture sector is crucial when it comes to propelling the country's economy amid the recession;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is the government agency responsible for the promotion of agricultural development by providing the policy framework, public investments, and support services needed for domestic and export-oriented business enterprises;

WHEREAS, for 2020, the Department of Agriculture was given a budget of Php 79.9 billion only;

WHEREAS, for 2021, the Department of Budget and Management has only given the Department of Agriculture an overall budget ceiling of only Php 61 billion;

WHEREAS, only Php 61 billion was approved despite the request of the DA for Php 284.4 billion 2021 budget;
WHEREAS, DA Secretary William Dar said that the high budgetary request will help assist those who seek new productivity in the farming and agriculture sector after the months-long lockdown drastically reduced employment opportunities;

WHEREAS, he further stated that they need the increase in budget to sustain and reboot the agriculture and fisheries sector amid the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the DA is seeking, among others, the following amounts totaling Php 251.9 billion for the following:

1. Php 55.9-billion budget for its rice sub-sector
2. Php 11.2 billion for the livestock sector
3. Php 22.5 billion for fisheries sector
4. Php 13.7 billion for high-value crops
5. Php 6.6 billion for corn industry
6. Php 960 million for organic agriculture
7. Php 3 billion for market development services
8. Php 114 million for the Halal food industry
9. Php 130.8 billion for locally funded projects
10. Php 7.15 billion as counterpart for foreign-assisted projects

WHEREAS, there is a need to increase the appropriations for the DA in order to help them achieve their goals and targets which covers industrialization including quality control and inspection of agriculture products and facilities, establishment of quarantine and sanitary clearances in its projects, export promotion, farm consolidation, legislative support for agriculture and fishery policies, funding for agricultural machinery, farm-to-market roads, and irrigation network services as part of infrastructure development.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives to urge the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations to increase the funds to be appropriated to the Department of Agriculture

Adopted.

RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ