

6 April 2020

The Honorable
Secretary SILVESTRE H. BELLO III
Department of Labor and Employment
Intramuros, Manila

Dear Secretary Bello,

We appreciate the efforts of the DOLE in alleviating the plight of workers seriously affected by the CoVid-19 pandemic. We hope the DOLE could accelerate some more the implementation of its programs.

NTUC Phl would like to re-stress representations made by NTUC Phl and its affiliates in various venues:

1. Workers and their organizations have not been part of discussions. Unions could have contributions to planning and implementation of programs. Millions of idled workers could be partners in the delivery system.
2. Janitors, maintenance persons, farmers, transport workers, grocery workers, delivery personnel, nurses and other health personnel are essential personnel, too. They are, for the most part, too exposed to the elements and need effective protection.
3. More attention could be paid to the needs of vulnerable groups, e.g., transportation, delivery of essentials to seniors, PWDs, etc.

Non-CoVid-19 cases have been sidelined, as a result of the (proper) preoccupation with the pandemic. There should be a scheme, other than the welcome online medical consultation, to address the needs of disadvantaged patients.

4. Assistance to workers, not corporations, should be priority. Government assistance to corporations should be conditioned on maximum retention (return) of workers and compliance with Phl laws.
5. Imports could supply many goods, at cheaper prices. Imports could hold down inflation, but there are risks of security of food and essential goods.

This early, there should be some thinking about certain things which need to be produced in-country, regardless of cheaper imports. Rice, PPEs, medical equipment, initially, come to mind.

6. There are idled ecozone companies which could be marshalled to producing essential items, thus bringing back workers and their wages, and reducing subsidies.

In addition to these general ideas, we propose the following:

From NTUC Phl:

1. Early release of the 13th month pay
2. Early release of the 13th month pension
3. More information on accessing the SSS two-month unemployment benefit.

From affiliate HEAL Phl (health employees)

1. Better and more reliable transportation to and from work for those required to work
2. Better and safer accommodations for those unable to go home from work
3. Hazard pay for those required to work
4. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPEs)
5. Regular disinfection of work premises and accommodations

From affiliate PLTIU (land transport)

1. Use of buses for transportation of essential workers required to work
3. Hazard pay for those required to work
4. Appropriate PPEs
5. Regular disinfection of buses and stops

From affiliate BWAP (BPO workers)

1. Subsidized wages for those unable to work
2. Work from home
3. Transportation to and from work for those required to work
4. Better and safer accommodations for those required to stay onsite
5. Hazard pay for those required to work
6. Appropriate PPEs
7. Regular disinfection of work premises and accommodations
8. Certain benefits to cover also non-regular workers (e.g., hazard pay)

From affiliate Obrero Pilipino


1. Subsidized wages for those unable to work
2. Transportation to and from work for those required to work
3. Better and safer accommodations for those required to stay onsite
4. Hazard pay for those required to work
5. Appropriate PPEs
6. Regular disinfection of work premises and accommodations

From affiliate NATOW (private school teachers)

1. Wage subsidy for contractual/probationary employees/teachers
2. Release of cash equivalent of unused vacation leave, sick leave, service incentive leave (even if not provided in the CBAs)
3. Early release of 13th month pay

We anticipate your kind action.

Respectfully,


 RODOLFO M. CAPOGUAN
 President

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