

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5687

Introduced by Representatives Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos, Elias C. Bulut Jr.,
Solomon R. Chungalao, Maximo, Jr. Y. Dalog, Nestor B. Fongwan, Mark O. Go and
Allen Jesse C. Mangaoang

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 15, Article X, of the 1987 Constitution provides that “*There shall be created autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordilleras consisting of provinces, cities, municipalities, and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of this Constitution and the national sovereignty as well as territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines.*”

Pursuant to this mandate, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was created in 1989 through Republic Act No. 6374. In 2001, Congress passed Republic Act No. 9054 to expand the territory and powers of the ARMM. During the 17th Congress, Republic Act No. 11054, also known as the “*Bangsamoro Organic Law*” (BOL) was enacted to establish the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and abolish the ARMM. In early 2019, the BOL was ratified through a plebiscite, marking the transition from ARMM to BARMM. On the other hand, an autonomous region in the Cordilleras has yet to be realized.

On July 15, 1987, President Corazon C. Aquino issued Executive Order No. 220 creating the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). The CAR was created for the purposes of administrative decentralization in order to accelerate the economic and social growth and development of the units in the region and to fill the resulting gap in the process of transforming a group of adjacent territorial and political subdivisions already enjoying local or administrative autonomy into an autonomous region vested with political autonomy. CAR is mandated to serve merely as a transitory coordinating agency in preparation for political autonomy, however, more than three decades since its creation, CAR continues to discharge administrative functions and coordinate the implementation of government programs within the Cordilleras.

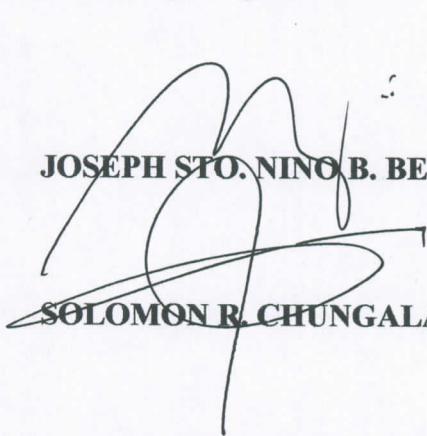
Two Organic Acts for an autonomous region were enacted in 1990 and in 1998. However, both measures were rejected by the Cordillerans. Following these two failed attempts, extensive information dissemination campaigns and public consultations were conducted to craft a legislative measure that truly reflects the need and aspiration of the people of the Cordilleras for regional autonomy. In recent years the movement for autonomy

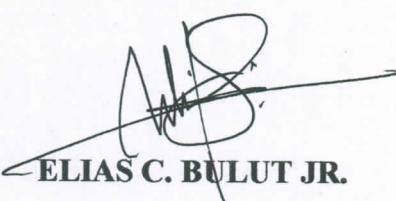
finds fortitude in the commitment of the Duterte Administration to support this Constitutional mandate.

The quest for autonomy continues, as many areas in the Cordilleras remain underdeveloped. Autonomy shall serve as the foundation upon which the people of Cordillera shall be empowered to pursue sustainable and inclusive growth, through the management, protection and development of their natural and human resources, and the promotion of the rights and culture of the Cordilleran people. It is through its progress and growth as an autonomous political entity that the Cordillerans can tap its potentials and contribute to national success.

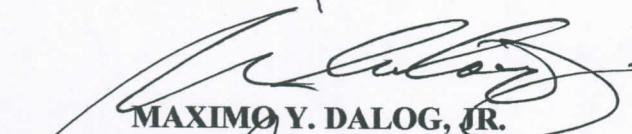
The collective aspiration of the Cordillerans for genuine autonomy is rooted on the right to self-determination of the people fueled by a long history of struggle for the recognition of their rights. It is high time that we make good on this Constitutional mandate, and allow the Cordillerans to determine their political status and to freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. By adopting necessary amendments and proposals, we have consistently endeavored to evolve this legislative measure as a product of the collaborative participation of all stakeholders. With clearer understanding of autonomy, its implications and effects on the lives of our people and on the future of Cordillera, the time is ripe for us to once again present to the Cordillerans the opportunity to realize this deeply ingrained desire.

Towards this end, the immediate consideration and approval of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.

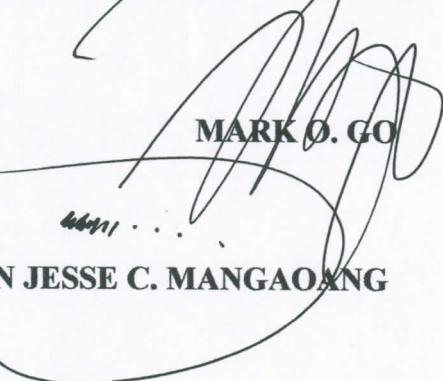

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Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5687

**Introduced by Representatives Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos, Elias C. Bulut, Jr.,
Solomon R. Chungalao, Maximo Y. Dialog, Jr., Nestor B. Fongwan, Mark O. Go, and
Allen Jesse C. Mangaoang**

1 **AN ACT**
2 **ESTABLISHING THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**
3

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

6 **PREAMBLE**
7

8 We, the Cordillerans, imploring the will of Divine Providence, exercising our
9 fundamental and Constitutional right to self-determination, faithful to the pursuit of our
10 forebears for the protection, conservation and development of our patrimony and cultural
11 heritage, in order to secure for ourselves and our posterity a region of peace and prosperity
12 founded on truth, fairness, freedom, justice, love and solidarity through an Autonomous
13 Region that shall ensure our human development, and our active participation as citizens in
14 the affairs of a united Philippine State, do proclaim this Organic Act of the Autonomous
15 Region of the Cordillera.

16 **ARTICLE I**
17 **NAME AND PURPOSE**
18

19 SECTION 1. **Name.** – There is hereby established an autonomous region in the
20 Cordillera to be known as the “*Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.*”
21

22 SEC. 2. **Purpose.** – The purpose of this law is to establish an effective political entity,
23 provide for its basic structure of government in recognition of the justness and cause of the
24 Cordillerans and to secure their identity, posterity, and allow for meaningful governance.
25

26 **ARTICLE II**
27 **AREA OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**
28

29 SEC. 3. **Area of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.** – The area of the
30 Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC) shall consist of the city and provinces that shall
31 vote favorably in the plebiscite called for the ratification of this Organic Act pursuant to
32 Section 18, Article X of the 1987 Constitution. The area of the plebiscite shall be the
33

1 provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and the chartered
2 City of Baguio.

3
4 SEC. 4. ***Cordilleran Identity.*** – The term “*Cordilleran*” shall apply to all citizens of
5 the Philippines who are residents for at least one (1) year within the ARC.
6

7
8 **ARTICLE III**
9 **DECLARATION OF POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES**

10
11 SEC. 5. ***Integral Part of the Republic.*** – The ARC shall remain an integral and
12 inseparable part of the national territory of the Philippines as defined by the Constitution and
13 existing laws. The autonomous region shall be governed and administered in accordance with
14 the laws enacted by the Regional Assembly and by this Organic Act.
15

16 SEC. 6. ***Equitable Share in the National Budget and Development Assistance.*** – The
17 national government shall provide the autonomous region a proportionate and equitable share
18 in the annual national budget and foreign assisted projects in addition to other financial
19 assistance, support and subsidies to accelerate its development. Whenever the Commission
20 on Audit finds that the internal controls set up in the region are inadequate, it may require
21 pre-audit and shall likewise conduct seminars in the communities concerned explaining the
22 benefits and proper use of the internal revenue allotments.
23

24 SEC. 7. ***Self-governance.*** – In the exercise of their right to genuine autonomy and
25 meaningful self-governance, Cordillerans are free to pursue their political, economic, social
26 and cultural development within the framework of national sovereignty and in accordance
27 with the Constitution.
28

29 SEC. 8. ***Democratic Political System.*** – The Regional Government is a democratic
30 political system allowing the people to participate in the political processes.
31

32 SEC. 9. ***Prior and Preferential Right.*** – Cordillerans shall have prior and preferential
33 right to the natural, material, and fiscal resources of the ARC.
34

35 SEC. 10. ***Fundamental Rights and Duties of People.*** – The fundamental rights and
36 duties of the people in the ARC are those defined in the Constitution, this Organic Act and
37 the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act.
38

39 SEC. 11. ***Rights to Initiatives, Consultations, Referenda and Plebiscites.*** – Without
40 prejudice to other rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the rights of the people of the ARC
41 to initiate measures for the passage, amendment or repeal of regional or local legislation; to
42 be consulted on matters that affect their welfare; to call for a referendum on important issues
43 affecting their lives; and, to recall regional or local officials as provided by Republic Act
44 (RA) No. 7160, also known as the “*Local Government Code of 1991*,” are hereby
45 recognized.
46

47 SEC. 12. ***Accountability of Public Officers.*** – The Regional Government, to meet the
48 priority needs and service requirements of its constituents shall adopt the principles of
49 integrity, transparency and accountability in order to ensure an accountable, efficient and
50 dynamic organizational structure.
51

1 SEC. 13. ***Upholding Human Rights.*** – The Regional Government shall take measures
2 to prevent torture, cruel, inhumane and degrading punishment, illegal detention and extra-
3 judicial killings.
4

5 SEC. 14. ***Establishment of Peace Zones.*** – The Regional Government adheres to the
6 policy of peace and shall establish peace zones within the region.
7

8 SEC. 15. ***Devolution of Powers.*** – The Regional Government shall adopt a policy on
9 local autonomy whereby regional powers shall be devolved to local government units (LGUs)
10 particularly in areas of education, health, human resources, science and technology, and
11 people empowerment. Until a law implementing this provision is enacted by the Regional
12 Assembly, the provisions of RA 7160 shall continue to apply to all provinces, cities,
13 municipalities, and barangay within ARC.
14

15 The regional assembly shall not pass any law to diminish, lessen or reduce the
16 powers, functions, and shares in the internal revenue allotment of the said local government
17 units as provided by RA 7160.
18

19 SEC. 16. ***Sustainable Use and Management of Resources.*** – The Regional
20 Government shall share with the national government in the exploration, development and
21 utilization of its natural resources, conservation and protection of natural resources by
22 promoting the sustainable use and management thereof and adopts environmentally sound
23 and appropriate technology in the management of natural resources. The use of renewable
24 energy shall be promoted for power generation.
25

26 SEC. 17. ***Community Responsive Education.*** – The Regional Government shall
27 integrate in the educational system a subject that responds to the needs of the Cordillera
28 communities which respects and promotes Cordilleran knowledge, core values, systems,
29 institutions, culture and practice; encourages the use of languages and methods of education;
30 promotes science and appropriate technology and methodologies that encourage creative and
31 critical thinking of the Cordilleran.
32

33 SEC. 18. ***Protection and Empowerment.*** – The Regional Government shall formulate
34 plans and programs for the empowerment of the youth and guarantees their effective
35 participation and representation in all aspects of public affairs. Laws shall be enacted, and
36 measures adopted to protect women and children against all forms of neglect, cruelty, and
37 exploitation which are harmful to their moral, physical, or mental health.
38

39 SEC. 19. ***Regional Arrangements.*** – The Regional Government shall pursue a policy
40 of interregional development planning, coordination and mutual cooperation in order to
41 sustain the use, development as well as the protection and conservation of its resources which
42 benefits other regions.
43

44 SEC. 20. ***Equal Access and Non-discrimination.*** – The Regional Government shall
45 ensure equal access by Cordillerans to resources, employment opportunities and services
46 regardless of ethnic origin, gender, language, political conviction, economic, social status or
47 religious belief.
48

49 SEC. 21. ***Social Justice.*** – The Regional Government shall minimize disparities
50 between the rich and the poor, rural and urban areas within the region by providing,
51 maintaining and ensuring the equitable delivery of basic and responsive health programs,
52

1 quality education, appropriate services, livelihood opportunities, affordable and progressive
2 housing projects and water resource development.

3
4 SEC. 22. **Foreign Investments.** – The Regional Government shall provide incentives
5 to investors, corporations and other businesses, but shall adopt measures to prevent the abuse
6 of human rights and exploitation of natural resources. To this end, the Regional Government
7 shall adopt local and international safeguards to review and audit the impact of all forms of
8 foreign aid, loans special projects and the like.

9
10 SEC. 23. **Customary Laws.** – Existing customary justice and laws on personal, family
11 and property relations shall be respected.

12
13 **ARTICLE IV**
14 **THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**

15
16 **A. Powers of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera**

17
18 SEC. 24. **Powers and Functions.** – The Regional Government shall exercise powers
19 and functions necessary for the proper governance and development of all provinces, cities,
20 municipalities, and barangays within the autonomous region consistent with the declared
21 constitutional policy on local autonomy and decentralization: *Provided:* That nothing in this
22 Act shall be construed as to authorize the diminution of the powers and functions already
23 enjoyed by local government units.

24
25 SEC. 25. **Devolved Powers.** – The Autonomous Region of the Cordillera is a corporate
26 entity with jurisdiction in all matters devolved to it by the Constitution and this Organic Act
27 as herein enumerated:

28 (1) Administrative organization:

- 29 a. Declaration of holidays;
30 b. Public administration and bureaucracy for the region; and
31 c. Identification, generation, and mobilization of international human resources for
32 capacity-building and other activities involving the same within the region.

33 (2) Creation of sources of revenues:

- 34 a. Authority to regulate power generation, transmission and distribution operating
35 exclusively in the autonomous region; and
36 b. Imposition of taxes except those which are already taxed by the national and local
37 government.

38 (3) Ancestral domain and natural resources:

- 39 a. Protection of the ancestral domain and ancestral lands of indigenous cultural
40 communities (ICCs) consistent with IPRA.
41 b. Declaration of nature reserves and aquatic parks, forests, watershed reservations,
42 and other protected areas in the autonomous region.
43 c. Authority, power, and right to the control and supervision over the exploration,
44 utilization, development, and protection of the lands, forests, water, minerals and
45 other natural resources within the autonomous region in accordance with the
46 Constitution and the pertinent provisions of this Organic Act including strategic
47 minerals such as uranium, petroleum, and other fossil fuels, mineral oil, and all
48 sources of potential energy.
49 d. Regulation of small-scale mining to the end that the ecological balance, safety and
50 health, and the interests of the affected communities, and the local government

1 units of the place where such operations are conducted are duly protected and
2 safeguarded.

3 (4) Urban and rural planning development:

- 4 a. Adoption and implementation of a comprehensive land use program;
5 b. Land management, land distribution, and agricultural land use reclassification;
6 and
7 c. Authority to conduct cadastral survey in coordination with the Department of
8 Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

9 (5) Economic, social and tourism development:

- 10 a. Establishment of transportation and communication facilities;
11 b. Promotion of tourism within the autonomous region; and
12 c. Regulation of games and amusement operations within ARC.

13 (6) Educational policies in skills training, research and scholarships.

14 (7) Preservation and development of the cultural heritage, establishment of its own
15 libraries and museums, and declaration of historical and cultural sites, in coordination
16 with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCAA); and

17 (8) Such other matters for the promotion of the general welfare of its inhabitants.

18
19 **B. Intergovernmental Relations**

20
21 SEC. 26. ***General Supervision.*** – Consistent with the principle of autonomy, the
22 President shall exercise general supervision over the Regional Government to ensure that
23 laws are faithfully executed.

24
25 SEC. 27. ***Regional Line Agencies.*** – Regional Line Agencies shall continue to exist
26 without diminution of their mandated authority. Regional line agency officials and employees
27 shall continue to be paid by the national government. There shall be no diminution of their
28 compensation and other benefits due its officials and employees. Existing assets and
29 properties of the regional line agencies and offices shall remain under their custody and
30 accountability.

31
32 SEC. 28. ***Tenure of Civil Service Employees.*** – Except for just cause and after due process,
33 officials and employees of the regional line agencies and offices in the region shall
34 not be laid off, dismissed or removed as a result of any reorganization attendant to the
35 establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

36
37 SEC. 29. ***Priority in Hiring.*** – Officials and employees of the regional autonomous
38 government and the regional line agencies in the autonomous region shall be hired in
39 accordance with appropriate civil service rules and regulations, but priority shall be accorded
40 to qualified Cordillerans.

41
42 SEC. 30. ***Appointment to Third Level Positions.*** – The Regional Governor shall fill
43 up third level positions from among at least three (3) recommendees of the Regional
44 Personnel Selection Board (PSB) that shall be duly constituted.

45
46 SEC. 31. ***Budget Preparation.*** – Regional line agencies and offices shall prepare their
47 respective budgets separate and distinct from the budget of the Regional Government. Their
48 budgets shall however be furnished to the regional government to ensure that plans and
49 priorities of the autonomous region are harmonized and properly considered in the budgeting
50 processes.

1 SEC. 32. ***Management of ODA Funds.*** – The autonomous region may avail of
2 Official Development Assistance (ODA)-funded projects and other foreign financial grants or
3 donations and shall undertake these projects through the regional line agencies, government-
4 owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), state colleges and universities, local
5 government units or whichever is deemed appropriate.

6 SEC. 33. ***Government Owned and Controlled Corporations.*** – Government Owned
7 and Controlled Corporations such as the Government Service Insurance System, the Social
8 Security System, the Pagtutulungan-Ikaw, Bangko Industriya't Gobyerno (PAG-IBIG),
9 PhilHealth and others shall continue to be governed by their respective charters and other
10 pertinent laws.

11 SEC. 34. ***Autonomy of Local Government Units.*** – Local government units shall
12 continue to be independent from each other and shall have the same set of local officials and
13 employees and shall enjoy autonomy and continue to exercise the powers granted them under
14 the Local Government Code and other existing laws. The Local Government Code shall
15 apply to all provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays in the autonomous region until the
16 Regional Assembly shall enact a regional Local Government Code. Nothing herein provided
17 shall be construed in any manner as to diminish the powers and functions as well as benefits
18 and privileges already being enjoyed by the local government units.

19 SEC. 35. ***Supervision of Local Government Units through the Regional Governor.*** –
20 Consistent with the basic policy on local autonomy, the President, through the Regional
21 Governor shall exercise supervision over LGUs in the autonomous region to ensure that their
22 acts are within the scope of their prescribed powers and functions.

23 SEC. 36. ***Revenues and Taxes Accruing to LGUs.*** – Revenues, taxes, fees and
24 charges generated by the local government units and the regional government from their
25 respective local tax ordinances shall exclusively accrue to them.

26 SEC. 37. ***Just Share in National Taxes.*** – The local government units in the
27 autonomous region, including the Regional Government, shall have a just share in the
28 national taxes and applicable revenues which shall be automatically released to them.

29 SEC. 38. ***Equitable Share in the Utilization of Resources.*** – The local government
30 units in the autonomous region including the Regional Government shall be entitled to an
31 equitable share in the proceeds of the utilization and development of the national wealth
32 within their respective areas, in the manner provided by law and this Organic Act.

33 SEC. 39. ***City Charters.*** – Chartered cities within the autonomous region shall be
34 governed primarily by their charters.

35 SEC. 40. ***Creation of Special Political Subdivisions.*** – Special metropolitan political
36 subdivisions may, by law, be created by the Regional Assembly, subject to a plebiscite. The
37 component cities and municipalities shall retain their basic autonomy and shall be entitled to
38 their own local executive and legislative bodies. The jurisdiction of the metropolitan
39 authority that will thereby be created shall be limited to basic services requiring coordination.

40 SEC. 41. ***Right of LGU's to Aggregate.*** – Local government units in the autonomous
41 region may group themselves, consolidate or coordinate their efforts, services, and resources
42 for purposes commonly beneficial to them in accordance with law.

ARTICLE V

ELECTIVE OFFICIALS OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGIONAL GOVERNMENT – THEIR QUALIFICATIONS, TERMS OF OFFICE, VACANCIES AND SUCCESSION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 42. *Elective Officials.* – The elective officials of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera are the (a) Regional Governor, (b) Regional Vice-Governor, and (c) Members of the Regional Assembly.

SEC. 43. *Qualifications.* – (a) Candidates for Regional Governor and Vice-Governor positions must be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, at least twenty-five (25) years of age on election day, a registered voter in the region and a resident thereof for a period of at least one (1) year immediately preceding the day of election, able to read and write Filipino or English; (b) Candidates for the position of Member of the Regional Assembly must be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, at least twenty five (25) years of age on election day, a registered voter in the provincial district or city and a resident thereof for a period of at least one (1) year immediately preceding the day of election, able to read and write Filipino or English or any other local language in the region.

SEC. 44. *Disqualifications.* – In addition to the disqualifications provided under Book I, Title Two, Chapter 1, Section 40 of the Local Government Code, candidates for Regional Governor, Vice-Governor and members of the Regional Assembly must not be related to the incumbent elected regional officials within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity.

SEC. 45. *Manner of Election.* – The Regional Governor and Vice-Governor, who shall belong to the same political party, shall be elected at large by direct vote of the registered voters of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. A vote to the Regional Governor shall be counted as a vote to the Regional Vice-Governor.

(a) Each province and city shall elect their own representatives to the Regional Assembly. Any highly urbanized city in the autonomous region is entitled to four (4) representatives to the Regional Assembly. Each province shall be entitled to four (4) representatives, two (2) per provincial district, and one (1) for the component city. *Provided:* That any component city created after the effectivity of this Organic Act shall be entitled to representation to the Regional Assembly as may be provided by law.

(b) Unless otherwise provided, the regular election of the Regional Governor, Vice Governor, and members of the Regional Assembly shall be held on the second Monday of May.

SEC. 46. *Term of Office.* – (a) The term of office of all elective regional officials elected after the effectivity of this Organic Act shall be three (3) years which shall begin at noon on the thirtieth day of June next following the day of election and shall end at noon of the same date three (3) years thereafter. No regional governor, vice-governor, or member of the regional assembly shall serve for more than three (3) consecutive terms.

(b) Voluntary renunciation of, or removal from, office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of the service for the full term for which officials were elected.

SEC. 47. *Oath of Office.* – The Regional Governor, Vice-Governor and Members of the Regional Assembly on assuming office shall take the following oath or affirmation:

1 *"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully and conscientiously fulfill my*
2 *duties as Governor/Vice-Governor/Member of the Regional Assembly of the*
3 *Autonomous Region of the Cordillera, preserve and defend the Constitution of the*
4 *Republic of the Philippines and the Organic Act of the Autonomous Region of the*
5 *Cordillera, execute these laws, do justice to all and consecrate myself to the service of*
6 *the nation and the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. So help me God."* (In case
7 *of affirmation, the last sentence will be omitted.)*

8
9 SEC. 48. **Prohibitions.** – (a) The Regional Governor and Vice-Governor shall not,
10 during their tenure, engage in the practice of any profession or hold any other office or
11 employment, except as otherwise provided in this Act.

12 (b) The spouse and other relatives by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil
13 degree of the Regional Governor and the Regional Vice-Governor shall not, during their
14 tenure, be appointed officers or employees of the Regional Government, except as members
15 of their confidential staff.

16 (c) No member of the Regional Assembly may hold any other office or employment
17 in the government or any subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof, including
18 government-owned or controlled corporations, or their subsidiaries, during their term without
19 forfeiting their seat. Neither shall any member of the regional assembly be appointed to any
20 office which has been created or the emoluments whereof increased by the Regional
21 Assembly during the term for which such member was elected.

22 (d) The Regional Governor, and Regional Vice-Governor, and members of the
23 Regional Assembly shall not personally appear as counsel before any court of justice or
24 before the Electoral Commission or quasi-judicial and other administrative bodies.

25 (e) The Regional Governor, Regional Vice-Governor, and members of the Regional
26 Assembly shall not participate directly or indirectly in any contract with or in any franchise
27 or special privilege granted by the Regional Government or any subdivision, agency or
28 instrumentality thereof, including any government-owned or-controlled corporations or in
29 any of their subsidiaries. They shall not intervene in any matter before any office of the
30 Autonomous Region of the Cordillera for their pecuniary benefit or where they may be called
31 upon to act on account of their office.

32
33 SEC. 49. **Vacancies and Succession.** – (a) In the event that the position of the
34 Regional Governor becomes permanently vacant, the Regional Vice-Governor shall
35 automatically become the Regional Governor.

36 (b) If the position of the Regional Vice-Governor becomes permanently vacant, the
37 member of the assembly belonging to the same political party, garnering the highest
38 percentage of votes in the district represented shall become the vice-governor or in case of
39 permanent disability, the second highest shall assume said position.

40 (c) In case of a permanent vacancy in the assembly where automatic succession does
41 not apply, the Regional Governor shall appoint to the position so vacated the nominee of the
42 political party to which the member who caused the vacancy belonged at the time of such
43 members' election. If the one causing the vacancy does not belong to any political party, the
44 Regional Governor shall appoint the nominee of the majority of the members of the
45 assembly. *Provided:* That the appointee has all the qualifications and none of the
46 disqualifications as provided by this Organic Act. *Provided further:* That in both cases the
47 appointee comes from the same district.

48 (d) For purposes of this article, a permanent vacancy arises when the incumbent
49 elective official concerned dies, voluntarily resigns, is removed from office, fills up a higher
50 vacant office, refuses to assume office, fails to qualify, or is otherwise permanently
51 incapacitated to exercise the powers and discharge the functions of the office.

1 SEC. 50. ***Temporary Vacancies.*** – (a) When the Regional Governor is temporarily
2 incapacitated to perform his duties for physical or legal reasons such as leave of absence,
3 travel abroad, and suspension from office, the regional vice governor shall automatically
4 exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions of the former except the power to
5 appoint, suspend or dismiss employees which can only be exercised if the period of
6 temporary incapacity exceeds thirty (30) working days.

7 (b) Said temporary incapacity shall terminate upon submission to the Regional
8 Assembly of a written declaration by the Regional Governor that he has reported back to
9 office. In cases where the temporary incapacity is due to legal causes, the regional official
10 concerned shall also submit necessary documents showing that said legal causes no longer
11 exist.

12 (c) When the incumbent Regional Governor is traveling within the country but outside
13 his territorial jurisdiction for a period not exceeding three (3) consecutive days, he may
14 designate in writing, the officer-in-charge of the said office. Such authorization shall specify
15 the powers and functions that the regional official concerned shall exercise except the power
16 to appoint, suspend or dismiss employees.

17 (d) In the event, however, that the Regional Governor concerned fails or refuses to
18 issue such authorization, the Regional Vice-Governor shall have the right to assume the
19 powers, duties and functions of the said office on the fourth day of absence of the Regional
20 Governor, subject to the limitations provided in subsection c, hereof.

21 (e) Except as provided above, the Regional Governor shall in no case authorize any
22 regional official to assume the powers, duties and functions of the office, other than the
23 Regional Vice-Governor or the highest-ranking Member of the Regional Assembly, as the
24 case may be.

25 SEC. 51. ***Approval of Leaves of Absence.*** – Leave of absence of elective officials of
26 the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall be approved as follows:

27 (a) Applications for leave of absence of regional officials, provincial governor, mayor
28 of a highly urbanized city or an independent component city shall be approved by the
29 Regional Governor or his duly authorized representative;

30 (b) Applications for leave of absence of other officials and employees other than those
31 enumerated above shall follow those stipulated in the Local Government Code; and

32 (c) Applications for leave of the Regional Governor shall be approved by the
33 President.

34 SEC. 52. ***Compensation.*** – (a) Unless otherwise provided by law, the Regional
35 Governor and Regional Vice-Governor shall receive an annual salary equivalent to that of a
36 department secretary and undersecretary, respectively, of the national government, which
37 shall not be decreased during their tenure. No increase in the salary of the Regional Governor
38 and Regional Vice-Governor shall take effect until after the expiration of the term of the
39 Regional Governor and Regional Vice-Governor approving the same.

40 (b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the Regional Speaker shall receive an annual
41 salary equivalent to that of the Regional Governor and members of the Regional Assembly
42 shall receive an annual salary equivalent to the salary of the Regional Vice-Governor. No
43 increase in salary provided for by law shall take effect until after the expiration of the term of
44 office of all members of the Regional Assembly approving the same.

45 (c) All regional elective officials shall not receive, during their tenure, any other
46 emoluments from the government.

47 SEC. 53. ***Accountability.*** – (a) ***Disclosure.*** All regional officials shall, upon their
48 assumption of office, make a full disclosure of their financial and business interests,

1 including those of their spouses and unmarried children under eighteen (18) years of age
2 living in their households. Any member who has a potential conflict of interest that may arise
3 from the measures filed shall notify the regional assembly. This section shall be governed by
4 R.A. 6713 or the Code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees.

5 (b) *Governing law.* Discipline of Regional Elective Officials shall be governed by
6 Chapter 4, Title Two of Book I of R.A 7160 and other applicable laws. Discipline of
7 Members of the Regional Assembly shall be governed by their internal rules.

8 (c) *Recall.* Regional elective officials may be subject to recall proceedings as
9 provided for by Chapter 5, Title Two of Book I of R.A. 7160 and other applicable laws.

10

11 ARTICLE VI 12 THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

13

14 SEC. 54. *Executive Authority.* – The executive power in the region shall be vested in
15 a Regional Governor. He shall exercise such powers and perform such duties and functions as
16 provided by this Organic Act and other laws.

17 SEC. 55. *Scope of Executive Authority.* – As chief executive of the Regional
18 Government, the Regional Governor shall exercise control and supervision over all programs,
19 projects, services and activities of the Regional Government and supervision over regional
20 line agencies and local government units within the autonomous region subject to existing
21 laws.

22 SEC. 56. *State of the Region Address.* – The Regional Governor shall deliver the
23 State of the Region Address to the Regional Assembly at the opening of its regular sessions.

24 SEC. 57. *Submission of Regional Budget.* – The Regional Governor shall submit the
25 proposed budget to the Regional Assembly within thirty (30) days from the opening of every
26 regular session, as the basis of the regional appropriations bill, budget of expenditures and
27 sources of financing, including receipts from existing and proposed revenue measures.

28 SEC. 58. *Administrative Support.* – The Regional Governor and the different regional
29 departments shall have sufficient administrative and support staff to efficiently and
30 effectively carry out their mandates and the purposes of the regional government.

31 SEC. 59. *Mandatory Staff.* – The regional autonomous government shall have the
32 following mandatory staff: (1) Regional Executive Secretary, (2) Regional Accountant, (3)
33 Regional Budget Officer, (4) Regional Administrator, (5) Regional Legal Officer, (6)
34 Regional Treasurer, and (7) Regional General Services Officer. In addition thereto, the
35 Regional Governor may, subject to the approval of the Regional Assembly and availability of
36 funds, create other offices deemed necessary.

37 The Regional Executive Secretary and the heads of the various regional offices and
38 employees under the executive department shall be appointed by the Regional Governor. The
39 appointment of the heads of regional offices requires the concurrence of the majority of the
40 members of the Regional Assembly and compliance to civil service law, rules and regulations
41 and this Organic Act. The Regional Assembly shall act on said appointment within fifteen
42 (15) days from the date of submission otherwise the same shall be deemed confirmed.

43 The rank and salary grade level of the heads of the different regional departments
44 shall be equivalent to the regional directors of regional line agencies. They shall receive

compensation, allowances and other emoluments and benefits allowed by law or ordinance. With the exception of the Regional Executive Secretary, the heads of the regional departments shall be mandatory.

The qualifications of regional appointive officials, their duties and functions, are as follows:

1) Regional Executive Secretary

- (a) The Regional Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree preferably in law, administration or any other related course from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired supervisory or managerial experience for at least five (5) years.
- (b) The term of office of the Regional Executive Secretary shall be co-terminus with that of the appointing authority.
- (c) The Regional Executive Secretary shall, subject to the control and supervision of the Regional Governor, carry out the following functions:

1. Directly assist the Regional Governor in the management of the affairs pertaining to the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera;
2. Implement directives, orders and decisions of the Regional Governor;
3. Exercise supervision and control over the various units in the Office of the Regional Governor including their internal administrative requirements;
4. Exercise supervision, in behalf of the Regional Governor, over the various agencies under the Office of the Regional Governor;
5. Provide overall coordination in the operation of the Regional Executive Office;
6. Determine and assign matters to the appropriate units in the Office of the Regional Governor;
7. Act on matters referred to the Office of the Regional Governor coming from the various regional offices and agencies of the government;
8. Provide consultative, research, fact-finding and advisory service to the Regional Governor;
9. Assist the Regional Governor in the performance of functions pertaining to legislation;
10. Assist the Regional Governor in the administration of special projects;
11. Take charge of matters pertaining to protocol in the Regional Government and ceremonial functions;
12. Provide secretarial and clerical services for the Regional Governor and other bodies;
13. Promulgate such rules and regulations necessary to carry out the objectives, policies and functions of the Office of the Regional Governor; and
14. Perform such other functions as the Regional Governor may direct.

2) Regional Accountant

- (a) The Regional Accountant shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good moral character, certified public accountant, and must have acquired experience in the treasury or accounting service for at least five (5) years.
- (b) The regional accountant shall take charge of both the accounting and internal audit services of the autonomous region and shall:
 1. Install and maintain an internal audit system in the autonomous region;

- 1 2. Prepare and submit financial statements to the Regional Governor and to the
2 Regional Assembly;
3 3. Apprise the Regional Assembly and other government officials on the
4 financial condition and operations of the autonomous region;
5 4. Certify to the availability of budgetary allotment to which expenditures and
6 obligations may be properly charged;
7 5. Review supporting documents before preparation of vouchers to determine
8 completeness of requirements;
9 6. Prepare statements of cash advances, liquidation, salaries, allowances,
10 reimbursements and remittances pertaining to the autonomous region;
11 7. Prepare statements of journal vouchers and liquidation of the same and other
12 adjustments related thereto;
13 8. Post individual disbursements to the subsidiary ledger and index cards;
14 9. Maintain individual ledgers for officials and employees of the autonomous
15 region pertaining to payrolls and deductions;
16 10. Record and post in index cards details of purchased furniture, fixtures, and
17 equipment, including disposal thereof, if any;
18 11. Account for all issued requests for obligations and maintain and keep all
19 records and reports related thereto;
20 12. Prepare journals and the analysis of obligations and maintain and keep all
21 records and reports related thereto; and
22 13. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
23 may be provided by law or ordinance.

24

25 **3) Regional Budget Officer**

- 26 (a) The Regional Budget Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of
27 good moral character, a holder of a college degree preferably in accounting,
28 economics, public administration or any related course from a recognized college or
29 university, first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent, and must have acquired
30 experience in government budgeting for at least five (5) years.
31 (b) The budget officer shall take charge of the budget office and shall:
32 1. Prepare forms, orders, and circulars embodying instructions on budgetary and
33 appropriation matters for the signature of the Regional Governor;
34 2. Review and consolidate the budget proposals of different departments and
35 offices of the Regional Government;
36 3. Assist the Regional Governor in the preparation of the budget and during
37 budget hearings;
38 4. Study and evaluate budgetary implications of proposed legislation and submit
39 comments and recommendations thereon;
40 5. Submit periodic budgetary reports to the Department of Budget and
41 Management;
42 6. Coordinate with the treasurer, accountant, and the planning officer for the
43 purpose of budgeting;
44 7. Assist the Regional Assembly in reviewing the approved budgets of the
45 provincial and highly urbanized cities;
46 8. Coordinate with the regional planning officer in the formulation of the
47 regional development plan; and
48 9. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
49 may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

50

51 **4) Regional Administrator**

- 1 (a) The Regional Administrator shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of
2 good moral character, holder of a college degree preferably in law, public
3 administration or any other related course from a recognized college or university and
4 must have acquired experience in management and administration work for at least
5 five (5) years.
6 (b) The term of office of the Regional Administrator shall be co-terminus with that of the
7 appointing authority.
8 (c) Subject to the control and supervision of the Regional Governor, the Regional
9 Administrator shall:
10 1. Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof by the Regional
11 Governor, implement the same particularly those which have to do with the
12 management and administration-related programs and projects which the
13 Regional Governor is empowered to implement and which the Regional
14 Assembly is empowered to provide under this Organic Act;
15 2. Assist in the coordination of the work of all the officials of the autonomous
16 region, under the supervision, direction, and control of the Regional Governor,
17 and for this purpose, may convene the chiefs of offices and other officials of
18 the autonomous region;
19 3. Establish and maintain a sound personnel program for the autonomous region
20 designed to promote career development and uphold the merit principle in the
21 local government service;
22 4. Conduct a continuing organizational development of the autonomous region
23 with the end in view of instituting effective administrative reforms;
24 5. Be in the frontline of the delivery of administrative support services,
25 particularly those related to the situations during and in the aftermath of man-
26 made and natural disasters and calamities;
27 6. Recommend to the Regional Assembly and advise the Regional Governor, as
28 the case may be, on all other matters relative to the management and
29 administration of the regional autonomous government; and
30 7. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
31 may be prescribed by law or by ordinance.

32 **5) Regional Legal Officer**

- 33 (a) The Regional Legal Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of
34 good moral character, member of the Philippine Bar, and must have been in the
35 practice of law for at least five (5) years.
36 (b) The term of office of the Regional Legal Officer shall be co-terminus with that of the
37 appointing authority.
38 (c) The Regional Legal Officer shall be the chief legal counsel of the regional
39 autonomous government, shall take charge of the office of legal services, and shall
40 perform the following:
41 1. Formulate measures for the consideration of the Regional Assembly and
42 provide legal assistance and support to the Regional Governor;
43 2. Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof by the Regional
44 Governor, implement the same, particularly those which have to do with
45 programs and projects related to legal services which the Regional Governor is
46 empowered to implement and which the Regional Assembly is empowered to
47 provide under this Organic Act;
48 3. Recommend measures and advise the Regional Governor on all other matters
49 related to upholding the rule of law;

- 1 4. Be in the frontline of protecting human rights and prosecuting any violations
2 thereof, particularly those which occur during and in the aftermath of man-
3 made or natural disasters or calamities;
- 4 5. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
5 may be prescribed by law or ordinance.
- 6 6. In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the legal officer shall:
- 7 i. Represent the regional autonomous government in all civil actions and
8 special proceedings wherein the autonomous region or any official
9 thereof, in his official capacity, is a party;
- 10 ii. When required by the Regional Governor, draft ordinances, contracts,
11 bonds, leases and other instruments, involving any interest of the
12 autonomous region and provide comments and recommendations on any
13 instrument already drawn;
- 14 iii. Render opinion in writing on any question of law when requested to do so
15 by the Regional Governor;
- 16 iv. Investigate or cause to be investigated any official or employee of the
17 Regional Government for administrative neglect or misconduct in office
18 and recommend appropriate action to the Regional Governor;
- 19 v. Investigate or cause to be investigated any person, firm or corporation
20 holding any franchise or exercising any public privilege for failure to
21 comply with any term or condition in the grant of such franchise or
22 privilege by the Regional Government, and recommending appropriate
23 action to the Regional Governor;
- 24 vi. When directed by the Regional Governor, initiate and prosecute in the
25 interest of the autonomous region any civil action on any bond, lease or
26 other contract upon any breach or violation thereof; and
- 27 vii. Review and submit recommendations on ordinances approved and
28 execute orders issued.

29

30 **6) Regional Treasurer**

- 31 (a) The Regional Treasurer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good
32 moral character, holder of a college degree preferably in commerce, public
33 administration or law from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired
34 experience in treasury or accounting service for at least five (5) years.
- 35 (b) The Regional Treasurer shall take charge of the Treasury Office, perform the duties
36 provided for under Book II of the Local Government Code, and shall:
- 37 1. Advise the Regional Governor and other Regional Government officials
38 concerned regarding the disposition of government funds, and on such other
39 matters relative to public finance;
- 40 2. Take custody of and exercise proper management of the funds of the
41 autonomous region;
- 42 3. Take charge of the disbursement of all Regional Government funds and such
43 other funds the custody of which may be entrusted by law or other competent
44 authority;
- 45 4. Maintain and update the tax information system of the autonomous region;
46 and
- 47 5. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
48 may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

1 **7) Regional General Services Officer**

- 2 (a) The Regional General Services Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a
3 Cordilleran, of good moral character, holder of a college degree preferably on public
4 administration, business administration and management or any other related course
5 from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired experience in general
6 services, including management of supply, property, solid waste disposal, and general
7 sanitation, for at least five (5) years.
- 8 (b) The Regional General Services Officer shall take charge of the Office on General
9 Services and shall:
- 10 1. Formulate measures for the consideration of the Regional Governor and provide
11 technical assistance and support in carrying out measures to ensure the delivery of
12 basic services and provision of adequate facilities pursuant to the Local
13 Government Code and this Organic Act which require general services expertise
14 and technical support services;
- 15 2. Develop plans and strategies, and upon approval thereof by the Regional
16 Governor implement the same, particularly those which have to do with the
17 general services supportive of the welfare of the inhabitants which the Regional
18 Governor is empowered to implement;
- 19 3. Be in the frontline of general services related activities, such as the possible or
20 imminent destruction or damage to records, supplies, properties, and structures
21 and the orderly and sanitary clearing up of waste materials or debris, particularly
22 during and in the aftermath of man-made and natural calamities and disasters;
- 23 4. Recommend and advise the Regional Governor on all matters relative to general
24 services;
- 25 5. In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the General Services Officer
26 shall:
- 27 i. Take custody of and be accountable for all properties, real or personal,
28 owned by the autonomous government and those granted to it in the form
29 of donation, reparation, assistance and counterpart of joint projects;
- 30 ii. With the approval of the Regional Governor, assign building or land space
31 to regional officials, who by law, are entitled to such space. Recommend
32 to the Regional Governor reasonable rental rates for Regional Government
33 properties, whether real or personal, which will be leased to public or
34 private entities;
- 35 iii. Recommend to the Regional Governor reasonable rental rates of private
36 properties which may be leased for the official use of the Regional
37 Government;
- 38 iv. Maintain and supervise janitorial, security, government public buildings
39 and other real property, whether owned or leased by the Regional
40 Government;
- 41 v. Collate and disseminate information regarding prices, shipping and other
42 costs of supplies and other items commonly used by the Regional
43 Government;
- 44 vi. Perform archival and record management with respect to records of offices
45 and departments of the Regional Government;
- 46 vii. Perform all other functions pertaining to supply and property management
47 heretofore performed by the Regional Government Treasurer and enforce
48 policies on records creation, maintenance, and disposal; and
- 49 viii. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as
50 may be prescribed by law or ordinance.
- 51

1 SEC. 60. ***Cordillera Development Council.*** – There shall be a Cordillera
2 Development Council (CDC) which shall function as the main planning and advisory body of
3 the autonomous government, setting the direction of economic and social development of the
4 autonomous region and through which regional development efforts shall be coordinated.
5

6 SEC. 61. ***Composition.*** – The CDC, which shall be headed by the Regional Governor,
7 shall be composed of the Regional Governor as chair, Private Sector Representative as co-
8 chair, the Regional Director of NEDA as vice-chair, and the following as members:
9

- (a) All the provincial governors, the city and capital town mayors in ARC.
- (b) Two (2) members of the Regional Assembly to be designated by its presiding officer.
- (c) Private sector representatives of duly accredited private sector and non-government or people's organizations, provided that their composition shall not be more than one-fourth of the total membership.
- (d) Regional heads of line agencies who are members of the NEDA Board.
- (e) The Council may designate special non-voting members coming from both the public and private sectors, upon concurrence of the majority of its regular members.

17 SEC. 62. ***Technical Support.*** – The regional office of the National Economic and
18 Development Authority (NEDA) shall serve as the secretariat and technical operations arm of
19 the Council.
20

21 SEC. 63. ***Functions.*** – The Cordillera Development Council shall:

- (a) Coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of short- and long- term regional development plans and investment programs, regional physical framework plans and special development plans, including the formulation of policy recommendations.
- (b) Integrate approved development plans of provinces and cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the autonomous region into the regional development plan.
- (c) Review, prioritize, and endorse to the autonomous government the annual and multi-year sectoral investment programs of the autonomous region for funding and implementation.
- (d) Review and endorse to the national government the annual budgets of agency regional offices, state colleges and universities and special development authorities.
- (e) Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the autonomous region to support regional development objectives, policies, strategies.
- (f) Review and endorse national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the autonomous region.
- (g) As required by the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), review and endorse projects of national government agencies that have impact on the region and projects of LGUs in the region requiring national government exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government budget appropriations or subsidies, among others.
- (h) Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several agencies or LGUs.
- (i) Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities, government-owned and/or controlled corporations and special development authorities in the autonomous region.
- (j) Perform other related functions and activities as may be necessary to promote and sustain the socio-economic development of the autonomous region.

SEC. 64. *Creation of Committees.* – The Council may create appropriate technical and sectoral committees to assist in its work.

3 SEC. 65. ***Existing Committees.*** – Existing regional coordinating committees that are
4 created by various laws and currently attached to specific agencies, and ad-hoc program or
5 project-based steering committees, such as, the Development Administration Committee,
6 Economic Development Committee, Social Development Committee, Infrastructure
7 Development Committee, Watershed and Environmental Management Committee,
8 Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Concerns, Regional Land Use Committee, Regional
9 Gender and Development Committee, Regional Project Monitoring Committee, Regional
10 Competitiveness Committee, Regional Development Budget Coordinating Committee,
11 Regional Statistical Coordination Committee, and the Cordillera Geographic Information
12 System Network, shall be placed under the umbrella of the CDC. Secretariat work of these
13 inter-agency committees shall continue to be provided by their mother agency.
14

ARTICLE VII

THE REGIONAL VICE-GOVERNOR

18 SEC. 66. ***Functions.*** — The Regional Vice-Governor shall assist the Regional
19 Governor in the day to day operation of the Regional Government, and shall:
20

- 21 1. Assume the office of the Regional Governor for the unexpired term of the latter in
22 the event of a permanent vacancy as provided in this Organic Act;

23

24 2. Exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions of the Regional
25 Governor in cases of temporary vacancy as provided in this Organic Act;

26 3. Exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions as may be prescribed by
27 law.

28 The Regional Vice-Governor may be appointed to the position of head of regional
29 office as may be created by the Regional Assembly, without the need of confirmation of the
30 Regional Assembly and the Civil Service Commission.

ARTICLE VIII

THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

34 SEC. 67. ***Legislative Authority.*** – The legislative power of the Regional Government
35 in the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall be vested in the Regional Assembly, except
36 to the extent reserved by the Constitution and this Organic Act on initiative and referendum.
37 Within its territorial jurisdiction and subject to the provisions of the Constitution and national
38 laws, the Regional Assembly shall have legislative powers over those functions enumerated
39 under Section 25.
40

41 SEC. 68. *Regional Speaker* – There shall be a Regional Speaker, who shall be
42 elected, from among the members of the Regional Assembly, on its first regular session. The
43 Assembly shall promulgate its rules and regulations for the conduct of its proceedings.
44

45 The Speaker, as the political and administrative head of the Assembly, is responsible
46 for the overall management of the proceedings, activities, resources, facilities and employees
47 of the Assembly. The Speaker shall:

1 a. Prepare the legislative agenda for every regular session, establish systems and
2 procedures to ensure full deliberation and swift approval of measures included therein, and
3 may, for the purpose, avail of the assistance of the Deputy Speakers, the Majority Leader, the
4 chairpersons of the standing committees and other Members of the Regional Assembly;

5 b. Conduct regular monthly caucus of all Members of the Regional Assembly or
6 groups thereof or as often as may be necessary to discuss priority measures and to facilitate
7 dialogue, consensus and action on issues and concerns affecting the Regional Government
8 and the performance of its functions;

9 c. Exercise general supervision over all committees and, in furtherance thereof,
10 conduct regular monthly meetings with the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of all standing
11 and special committees to set legislative targets, review performance in the attainment of
12 targets, ensure that the priority legislative measures of committees are attuned to the
13 legislative agenda of the Regional Assembly, and resolve such other issues and concerns that
14 affect the operations and performance of the committees;

15 d. Establish, as far as practicable, an efficient information management system of the
16 secretariat utilizing among others, modern digital technology, that can:

17 1. Facilitate access to and dissemination of data and information needed in
18 legislation inclusive of facilitating real time translation of plenary proceedings in the
19 major Philippine dialects and languages;

20 2. Provide a simplified and comprehensive process of gathering, recording,
21 storage and retrieval of data and information relating to activities and proceedings of
22 the Regional Assembly;

23 3. Sustain a public information program that will provide accessible, timely
24 and accurate information relating to the Regional Assembly, its Members and
25 officers, its committees and its legislative concerns inclusive of facilitating, as far as
26 practicable, broadcast coverage of plenary and committee proceedings;

27 e. Establish an efficient and effective system to monitor and evaluate the performance
28 of legislative tasks and duties of the Regional Assembly, its Members and its committees;

29 f. Designate a Member as temporary presiding officer after informing the Deputy
30 Speakers: Provided, That any such designation shall be effective for one session day only;

31 g. Take appropriate measures as may be deemed advisable or as the Regional
32 Assembly may direct, to preserve order and decorum in the session hall, the galleries, lobbies,
33 chambers, offices, corridors and premises of the Regional Assembly;

34 h. Sign all acts, resolutions, memorials, writs, warrants and subpoenae that may be
35 issued by or upon order of the Regional Assembly;

36 i. Perform administrative functions such as, among others:

37 1. Appointment of personnel of the Regional Assembly with authority to
38 delegate this power;

39 2. Suspension, dismissal or imposition of other disciplinary measures on the
40 personnel of the Regional Assembly in accordance with Civil Service rules: Provided,
41 That the suspension or dismissal of the Regional Secretary General and the Regional
42 Sergeant-at-Arms shall take effect only upon the concurrence of the majority of all the
43 Members of the Regional Assembly;

44 3. Consolidation or splitting of vacant positions carrying salaries and wages
45 which may be increased or reduced in the process, or creation of new positions in
46 accordance with the Regional Appropriations Act: Provided, That the total amount
47 involved shall not exceed the total amount appropriated for the salaries and wages of
48 the personnel of the Regional Assembly;

49 4. Implementation of merit-based policies and programs on personnel
50 recruitment, training and development, promotions, incentives and benefits to ensure
51

1 that the Regional Assembly has a corps of competent professionals able to provide
2 needed legislative support services; and

3 5. Review, approve, and sign contracts entered into by the Regional Assembly,
4 with the authority to delegate this power.

5 j. Prepare the annual budget of the Regional Assembly;

6 k. Prepare, in consultation with the appropriate committee of the Regional Assembly,
7 the rules and regulations governing public access to personal data and related information,
8 including statements of assets and liabilities, of Members of the Regional Assembly;

9 l. Develop through an appropriate entity of the Regional Assembly a system for drug
10 testing, which may provide for the testing of any Member, officer, or employee of the
11 Regional Assembly, and otherwise shall be comparable in scope to the system for drug
12 testing in the executive branch of the Regional Government. Provided, That the expenses of
13 the system may be paid from applicable accounts of the Regional Assembly for official
14 expenses; and

15 m. Require the submission of performance reports at the end of every regular session
16 and fiscal year from the committee chairpersons, the Regional Secretary General and the
17 Regional Sergeant-at-Arms, and such other reports as may be required from all concerned
18 officers and offices of the Regional Assembly.

19 The Regional Speaker shall be the permanent head of delegation and representative of
20 the Regional Assembly in all local or international parliamentary gatherings and
21 organizations: Provided, That Regional Speaker may designate any Member of the Regional
22 Assembly to be the representative of the Regional Speaker and may also determine, upon the
23 recommendation of the Majority Leader, in consultation with the Minority Leader, who shall
24 constitute the Assembly's delegation to any local or international conference or forum of
25 parliamentarians and legislators and the secretariat support staff to be mobilized for the
26 purpose.

27 SEC. 69. ***Enactment of Laws and Resolutions.*** – The Regional Assembly shall enact
28 ordinances, approve resolutions and appropriate funds for the general welfare of the region
29 and its inhabitants as well as for the efficient and effective operation of the Regional
30 Government.

31 SEC. 70. ***Creation, Division, Merger and Abolition of Local Government Units.*** –
32 The Regional Assembly may, by law create, divide, merge or abolish municipalities or
33 barangays. The municipalities or barangays created, divided or merged shall be entitled to
34 their appropriate share in the national taxes or Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). Provided,
35 that it shall be approved by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite in the political units
36 directly affected.

37 SEC. 71. ***Administrative Support.*** – The Regional Assembly shall have an
38 administrative and support staff. Each member shall have at least three (3) confidential
39 Legislative Assistants whose qualifications, rank and salary grade level shall be equivalent to
40 regional executive assistants. Their term of service shall however be co-terminus with their
41 overseer.

42 SEC. 72. ***Regular and Special Sessions.*** – The Regional Assembly shall start its
43 regular session on the first Monday of July, and by resolution fix the day, time and place of
44 its regular sessions, which shall be held at least once a week. However, the Assembly may be
45 called to a special session by the Regional Speaker or the Regional Governor whenever

1 necessary and a notice of meeting shall be sent to the member's place of residence at least
2 twenty-four (24) hours before the special session is held. Unless otherwise concurred in by
3 two-thirds (2/3) votes of the members, there being a quorum, no other matters may be
4 considered at a special session except those stated in the notice. The Regional Assembly may
5 invite the President and other government officials to address it.

6
7 SEC. 73. **Sessions and Quorum.** – A majority of all the members of the Regional
8 Assembly shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may adjourn from
9 day to day and may compel the attendance of absent members in such manner, and under
10 such penalties as the Assembly may provide in its rules.

11
12 On the first regular session following the election of its members, and within ninety
13 (90) days thereafter, the Regional Assembly shall adopt or update its rules of proceedings
14 which shall include, among other things, the organization of the Assembly and the election of
15 its officers, creation of standing committees, the time, place and manner of convening its
16 regular and special sessions, the conduct and discipline of its members, the conduct and
17 discipline of every person present during its session, the preparation and publication of its
18 journal, the determination of quorum, and the necessary votes to pass any measure, and recall
19 proceedings in accordance with the Local Government Code.

20
21 SEC. 74. **Law.** – (a) Every bill shall embrace only one (1) subject which shall be
22 expressed in the title thereof.

23 (b) No bill shall become a law unless it has passed three readings on separate days, and
24 printed copies thereof in its final form have been distributed to the members three (3)
25 days before its passage, except when the Regional Governor certifies to the necessity of
26 its immediate enactment to meet a public calamity or emergency affecting the region, or
27 the component provinces, cities, municipalities or barangays.

28 (c) On third reading of a bill, no amendment thereto shall be allowed, and the vote
29 thereon shall be taken immediately thereafter, and the yeas and nays entered in the
30 Journal.

31 (d) Every bill passed by the Regional Assembly shall, before it becomes a law, be
32 presented to the Regional Governor. If the Regional Governor approves the same, the
33 Regional Governor shall sign it, otherwise, the Regional Governor shall veto it and
34 return the same to the Regional Assembly with the objections. The Regional
35 Governor shall communicate the veto on any bill to the Regional Assembly within ten
36 (10) days from receipt thereof, otherwise, it shall become a law as if it was signed.

37 Upon receipt of the veto, the Regional Assembly shall enter the objections in its
38 journal and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds (2/3) of
39 all the members of the Regional Assembly shall agree to pass the bill, it shall become
40 a law.

41 (e) The Regional Governor shall have the power to veto any particular item or items in an
42 appropriation or revenue, but the veto shall not affect the item or items to which the
43 Regional Governor does not object.

44
45 SEC. 75. **People's Question Hour.** – There shall be a people's hour at least once a month
46 or as often as the rules of the Regional Assembly may provide, which shall be included in the
47 Order of Business, during which, upon initiative of any Member of the Cabinet, may, with
48 the consent of the Regional Governor, or upon the request of the Regional Assembly, appear
49 and answer questions and interpellations by members of the Assembly on any matter
50 pertaining to the Cabinet Member's department.

1 The Regional Assembly or any of its committees may conduct inquiries in aid of
2 legislation in accordance with its duly published rules of procedure. The rights and dignity of
3 persons appearing in or affected by such inquiries shall be respected.

4
5 SEC. 76. ***Immunity from Suit.*** – No member shall be questioned or be held liable in any
6 other place for any speech or debate in the Regional Assembly or in any committee thereof.
7

8 SEC. 77. ***Appropriations Bill.*** – The Regional Assembly shall pass an appropriations bill
9 for the ensuing year at or before the end of each year, based on the budget of expenditures
10 and sources of funds submitted to it by the Regional Governor.

- 11 (a) No provision or enactment shall be embraced in the regional appropriations bill,
12 unless it relates specifically to some particular appropriations therein. Any such
13 provision or enactment shall be limited in its operation to the appropriation to which it
14 relates.
15 (b) The procedure in approving appropriations for the Regional Assembly shall strictly
16 follow the same procedure for approving appropriations for the regional executive
17 department.
18 (c) A special appropriations bill shall specify the purpose for which it is intended, and
19 shall be supported by funds actually available as certified by the Regional Treasurer
20 or to be raised by a corresponding revenue proposal therein.
21 (d) No law shall be passed authorizing any transfer of appropriations.
22 (e) The Regional Assembly may not increase the appropriations recommended by the
23 Regional Governor for the operation of the Regional Government as specified in the
24 budget. The form, content and manner of preparation of the budget shall be prescribed
25 by regional law: Provided, however, that pending the enactment of such a regional
26 law, the budgeting process of the Regional Government shall be governed by existing
27 national laws and rules and regulations prescribed by the Department of Budget and
28 Management.

29
30 SEC. 78. ***Expenditure of Public Funds.*** – No money shall be paid out of the regional
31 treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation made by regional law.

- 32 (a) No money or property shall be appropriated, applied, paid or used, directly or
33 indirectly, for the use, benefit or support, of any sect, church, denomination, sectarian
34 institution, or system of religion or for the use, benefit or support of any priest,
35 preacher, minister or other religious teacher or dignitary as such, except when such
36 priest, preacher, minister or dignitary is assigned to the regional police or government
37 orphanage and rehabilitation centers or similar institutions.
38 (b) All money collected on any regional tax levied for a special purpose shall be treated
39 as a special fund and paid out for such purpose only. If the purpose for which a
40 special fund was created has been fulfilled or abandoned, the balance, if any, shall be
41 transferred to the general fund of the Regional Government.

42
43 SEC. 79. ***Certified True Copies of Law.*** – The Regional Assembly shall, within ten (10)
44 working days from approval thereof, submit to the President and to both Houses of Congress
45 a certified true copy of all laws and resolutions it passed.

46
47 SEC. 80. ***Creation of Offices.*** – The Regional Assembly may create such other offices
48 and positions as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the regional government
49 subject to availability of funds.
50

SEC. 81. *Program for Development.* – Subject to national laws and, sound public administration principles, exercising the corporate powers of the Regional Government under the Constitution and RA 7160, the Regional Assembly shall evolve a program for generating development funds to accelerate social and economic development in the region. The Regional Government shall implement the same, after conducting public consultation. Provided, that when regional revenues are insufficient, the difference shall be funded by the national government.

SEC. 82. *Approval of Plans.* – The Regional Assembly shall approve by ordinance the recommended regional physical framework plan, the regional development plan, the regional development investment program, the regional annual investment plan and regional annual budget within the prescribed timetable.

SEC. 83. *Enactment of Necessary Legislation.* – When the need arises, the Regional Assembly shall enact laws and necessary legislative measures that shall strengthen and supplement the implementation of national laws, devolved functions and address conflicting laws.

ARTICLE IX

PATRIMONY, ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 84. *Coordination and Cooperation.* – The Regional Government, with the support of the national government, shall, pursuant to regional autonomy and poverty alleviation initiate, stimulate, facilitate, support and coordinate development in the region towards attaining equitable distribution of opportunities, income, and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services available to Cordillerans and an expanding productivity and income as the key to raising the quality of life for all:

- a. The national government shall provide financial support and assistance to the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera by appropriating such sums as may be necessary to accelerate the development of the autonomous region, on top of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) provided therewith and the Local Government Units as well as the allocations already provided through the regional line agencies.
 - b. The national government shall consult and coordinate with the autonomous Regional Government before programs and projects are undertaken in the autonomous region.

SEC. 85. *Cordillera Development Plan.* – The Regional Government through the Cordillera Development Council shall formulate its development plans taking into consideration the Cordilleran's unique needs and aspirations, consistent with national development goals. The Development Plan shall include the promotion of growth and full employment, human development, and address social and economic inequities that have resulted from decades of neglect, historical injustice, poverty and inequality.

SEC. 86. *Control and Supervision over Natural Resources.* – The Regional Government shall have control and supervision over natural resources in accordance to this Organic Act.

SEC. 87. Preferential Rights of Cordillerans to Utilize and Develop Natural Resources. – The exploration, development, utilization, and enjoyment of natural resources shall be allowed to citizens of the Philippines and to private enterprises, including corporations, cooperatives, and similar collective organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) of their capital investment or capital stocks directly controlled or owned by Filipinos: Provided, that priority be given to Cordillerans in the implementation of programs, projects, and activities

1 related to these natural resources in the region and shall comply with the provisions of the
2 Constitution and this Organic Act.

3
4 SEC. 88. ***Comprehensive Framework for Sustainable Development***. – The Regional
5 Government shall develop a comprehensive framework for sustainable development through
6 the proper conservation, utilization and development of natural resources. Such framework
7 shall guide the Regional Government in adopting programs, policies, and mechanisms that
8 focus on the protection of the environment, and reduction of vulnerability from climate
9 change.

10
11 SEC. 89. ***Development of Lands 18° Above in Slope***. – The Regional Government in
12 partnership with the communities, especially the indigenous peoples or indigenous cultural
13 communities, and their government units, and support of the national government shall adopt
14 measures for the development of communities occupying lands eighteen degrees in slope or
15 over, by providing the necessary infrastructure, financial and technical support.

16
17 SEC. 90. ***Transportation and Communication System***. – The Regional Government
18 shall, in coordination with the national government, establish a transportation and
19 communication system interconnecting the various areas of the autonomous region with each
20 other and to other regions adjacent to the Cordilleras. Likewise, the Regional Government in
21 close coordination with component local government units shall plan, construct, modernize
22 and maintain rural and urban infrastructure facilities and utilities, including alternative
23 transport systems within critical environments.

24
25 SEC. 91. ***Agrarian Reform***. – Subject to ecological considerations, the Regional
26 Government shall adopt and implement a comprehensive rural agrarian reform program, as
27 well as an urban development program consistent with the Constitution and national laws and
28 policies to ensure the just and sustainable utilization of land within its jurisdiction.

29
30 SEC. 92. ***Environmental Protection***. – The Regional Government shall develop standards
31 pertaining to the protection, conservation, and enhancement, of the environment and natural
32 resources, appropriate to the socio- cultural and environmental uniqueness of the Cordillera.

33
34 SEC. 93. ***Transfer of Existing Nature Reserves and Protected Areas***. – The management
35 and protection of nature reserves and aquatic parks, forests, watershed reservations, and other
36 protected areas in the Autonomous Region that have already been defined by and under the
37 authority of the National Government shall be transferred to the Regional Government.

38
39 The Regional Transition Committee composed of the Regional Governor, Department of
40 Environment and Natural Resources, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples,
41 representatives of IPs and ICCs affected, as well as other relevant government agencies shall
42 cause the process of transferring these areas including the conduct of surveys of all affected
43 areas and the planning and transition for each and every protected area. Such process shall be
44 completed within a period not exceeding two years.

45
46 SEC. 94. ***Renewable and other Energy Resources and Extractive Industries***. – Policies
47 on Renewable and other energy resources and extractive industries shall be drawn up by the
48 Regional Assembly in accordance with its Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan, as
49 well as its over-all medium-term and long- term Regional Development Plan.

1 SEC. 95. ***Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements.*** – The Regional Governor
2 shall initiate and recommend to the President the applications for financial and technical
3 assistance agreements covering mineral resources within the region

4
5 SEC. 96. ***Participation in National Development Planning.*** – To ensure that the
6 Regional development plans are reflected in the national development plans, the Regional
7 Government shall participate in national development planning. The Regional Governor shall
8 be a member of the Board of the National Economic and Development Authority.

9
10 **ARTICLE X**
11 **SOURCES OF REVENUES AND OTHER FISCAL MATTERS**

12
13 SEC. 97. ***Share from the National Revenues.*** – To conserve, protect and develop the
14 national patrimony and heritage located in the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera, and
15 devolved to the region by this Organic Act, and to fund its operations, the Regional
16 Government shall have a share of the national revenues which include the following:

17 (a) ***Three percent (3%) of the National Internal Revenue Taxes.*** The Regional
18 Government shall have a share in the national internal revenue taxes equivalent to 3
19 percent based on the collection of the third fiscal year preceding the current fiscal
20 year. Eighty percent (80%) of such share shall be appropriated in the annual regional
21 budget for development projects. The internal revenue allotment share of the Regional
22 Government shall be released directly to the Regional Government Treasurer and
23 shall not be subject to any lien or holdback that may be imposed by the national
24 government for whatever purpose.

25
26 (b) ***Forty percent (40%) Share of the National Wealth Tax.*** The Regional Government
27 shall have a separate forty percent (40%) share of the gross collections in the
28 preceding fiscal year from mining taxes, royalties, environmental services, forestry
29 and fishery charges, energy production charges, and such other taxes, fees and
30 charges, including related surcharges, interests and fines derived from the utilization
31 and development of the national wealth within its territorial jurisdiction. Provided that
32 the share in national wealth shall be used for the preservation and further development
33 of the environment.

34
35 The Regional Government shall have a share of one and one-half percent (1.5%) of the
36 gross sales or receipts derived from the utilization and development of the national wealth
37 within their territorial jurisdiction. This provision shall be applicable to all corporations,
38 partnership, individuals and other entities including government agencies and government
39 owned or controlled corporations engaged in the utilization and development of the national
40 wealth within the region irrespective of existing contrary laws, rules and regulations of
41 national application.

42 The share in the preceding paragraph shall be distributed in the following manner:

- 43 (1) Province / Highly Urbanized City – Twenty percent (20%)
44 (2) Component City/ Municipality – Forty percent (40%)
45 (3) Barangay – Thirty percent (30%)
46 (4) Region – Ten percent (10%)

47
48 (c) ***Two percent (2%) share out of the Economic Zones Tax.*** The Regional Government
49 shall have a separate two percent (2%) share out of the five percent (5%) final tax on
50 gross income earned or equivalent to forty percent (40%) of total tax paid by

1 businesses within the economic zones found in the Cordillera, in addition to the
2 existing shares of the local government units of two percent (2%).
3

4 (d) *Twenty percent (20%) Share of Excess in Value Added Tax.* The ARC shall have a
5 separate twenty percent (20%) share of the excess in VAT collections from the
6 immediately preceding year within the territorial jurisdiction of the autonomous
7 region. The fund shall support cottage industry programs.
8

9 Local Government Units shall have a separate twenty percent (20%) share of the excess
10 in VAT collections from the immediately preceding year.
11

12 (e) *Fifteen percent (15%) Share of Total Excise Tax.* The ARC shall have a separate
13 fifteen percent (15%) share of the total excise tax collection on all products subject to
14 excise tax within the territorial jurisdiction of the autonomous region for the second
15 calendar year preceding the year of distribution, in addition to the existing shares of
16 the local government units.
17

18 Local Government Units shall have a separate fifteen percent (15%) share from the total
19 excise tax collection on locally manufactured virginia-type cigarettes for the second year
20 preceding the year of distribution.
21

22 (f) *Fifteen percent (15%) Share of Incremental Excise Tax in Burley and Native Tobacco
23 Products.* The Regional Government shall have a separate fifteen percent (15% share
24 of the excise tax collected on burley and native tobacco products collected within the
region.
25

26 Local Government Units shall have a separate fifteen percent (15%) share of the excise
27 tax collected on burley and native tobacco products.
28

29 (g) *Forty percent (40%) Share of Renewable and other energy Tax.* The Regional
30 Government shall have a separate forty percent (40%) of the special privilege tax on
31 Renewable and other energy resources developed for the maintenance of watersheds
32 and social and economic development of the upstream host communities.
33

34 Local Government Units' share from the renewable and other energy resources tax shall
35 be based on the computation provided under the Local Government Code (RA 7160).
36

37 (h) Three percent (3%) of net income of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation
38 (PAGCOR) and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) for construction and
39 maintenance of school buildings, hospitals and related structures and services.
40

41 (i) Shares in future tax impositions by the national government.
42

43 SEC. 98. ***Downstream Benefits.*** – The ARC shall be entitled to one and one-half percent
44 (1.5%) of the gross receipts from the utilization of national wealth sourced or emanating from
45 the Autonomous Region by persons, individual or juridical entities operating outside the
46 territorial jurisdiction of the Autonomous Region.
47

48 SEC. 99. ***Sources of Regional Government Revenues.*** – The ARC shall be entitled to the
49 following sources of revenues:
50

51 a. Fees and charges imposed by the Regional Government;

- 1 b. Taxes, fees, or charges for the registration of motor vehicles and for the issuances of
2 all kinds of licenses or permit for the driving thereof, except tricycles which shall be
3 registered with the city or municipality within whose territorial boundaries they are
4 operated;
5 c. Shares and revenue generated from the operations of public utilities within the
6 autonomous region;
7 d. Appropriations, shares in the internal revenue taxes, block grants, and other budgetary
8 allocations coming from the central government or national government, and
9 e. Block grants derived from economic agreements or conventions entered into or
10 authorized by the Regional Assembly, donations, endowments, foreign assistance, and
11 other forms of aid, subject to the pertinent provisions of the Constitution.

12
13 SEC. 100. ***Power of Taxation.*** – The ARC shall have the power to create its own sources
14 of revenues and to levy fees, charges and taxes subject to such guidelines and limitations of
15 the Constitution and this Act, consistent with the basic policy of local autonomy. It shall
16 likewise have the power to grant incentives or exemption on fees and charges which it is
17 empowered to impose under this Act.

18
19 SEC. 101. ***Situs of Taxation.*** – All corporations, partnerships, and other entities,
20 including government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations directly
21 engaged in business in the region shall pay their corresponding taxes, fees, and charges to the
22 province, city, municipality or barangays where such establishments are conducting their
23 business operations irrespective of the location of their principal or main offices.

24
25 SEC. 102. ***Appropriations from the National Government.*** – The national government
26 shall continue to provide appropriations for the regular operations and programs of devolved
27 line agencies in the region to be prepared by the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera and
28 incorporated under the General Appropriations Act. The National Government shall provide
29 appropriations for the mandatory organizational structure and positions of the Autonomous
30 Region of the Cordillera and the latter may access other special purpose funds appropriated in
31 the national budget.

32
33 SEC. 103. ***Donations to the Regional Government.*** – Donations or grants to the region to
34 be used in undertaking projects in health, education, culture, youth and sports development,
35 housing, science and technology, and in economic development, shall be deductible in full in
36 determining the taxable income of the donor or grantor. Provided, that the validation and
37 certification processes for such donations or grants shall have been done according to
38 regional law.

39
40 SEC. 104. ***Trade Agreements.*** – The Regional Governor, in accordance with the
41 provisions of the Constitution and national laws, and upon the recommendation of the
42 Cordillera Development Council may enter into agreements or trade compacts and contract
43 loans subject to the ratification of the Regional Assembly to generate grants and foreign loans
44 for development of the region.

45
46 SEC. 105. ***Limitations on Contracting of Loans.*** – The Regional Governor may contract
47 loans only in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and national laws and subject
48 to the approval of the Regional Assembly.

49
50 SEC. 106. ***Banks and other financial institutions.*** – The ARC shall encourage the
51 establishment of banks and other financial institutions and their branches to facilitate the

1 accumulation of capital and investment and the delivery of credit assistance to business in the
2 region.

ARTICLE XI

AGRICULTURE, AGRARIAN REFORM, TRADE AND INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND COOPERATIVE

SEC. 107. *Agrarian Reform and Sustainable Agricultural and Fisheries Development.* – Consistent with applicable laws, the Regional Government shall, as a basic policy, promote agrarian reform and sustainable agricultural development within the principles of social equity and poverty alleviation, food security and food sufficiency, global competitiveness, fair trade, rational use of resources.

- (a) The Regional Government shall ensure that basic agricultural support services and infrastructure be accessible to the small and marginalized farmers and fisher folks. It shall likewise promote agribusiness and full employment based on a sound agricultural development and agrarian reform.
 - (b) The Regional Government shall put special emphasis on production towards self-sufficiency of staple food commodities and shall at all times guarantee the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe food commodities.
 - (c) The Regional Government shall work on the improvement of the quality and value of raw and processed agri-based products as a means to enhance competitiveness of the agriculture and fisheries sectors in the domestic and global markets.
 - (d) The Regional Government shall formulate and implement measures to promote indigenous concept of farming and protect the farmers from unfair trade practices and unfair competition.
 - (e) The Regional Government shall ensure the equitable and rational distribution of public resources and investments in order to obtain the optimum returns on investments and to benefit a greater number of constituents.
 - (f) The Regional Government shall always consider the limited carrying capacity of the region's natural and agricultural resources in the development of agricultural and fisheries programs and interventions.

SEC. 108. *Development of Water Resources.* – The Regional Government shall give top priority to the conservation, protection, testing, utilization and development of water resources for agriculture, fisheries development, domestic water supply and power development. It shall enact appropriate legislation which shall enhance, develop, conserve, and protect natural fishery resources especially on specie endemic to the Cordillera.

SEC. 109. *Promoting the Rights of Fisher Folks.* – The Regional Government shall recognize, promote, and protect the rights and welfare of fisher folks, their associations and cooperatives. The provinces and cities concerned shall support to subsistence fisher folk through adequate funds, appropriate technology and research, marketing assistance, and other support services like fishery processing facilities and access to credit.

SEC. 110. *Agriculture Production.* – The Regional Government shall pursue the following strategies to develop and increase agricultural productivity.

- (a) Pursue a multidisciplinary research, development and extension activities to produce and promote technologies and invent machinery and facilities, that will be used to improve productivity and product quality, reduce cost of production, enhance value-

addition and improve processing, and enhance abilities to protect the environment and agricultural resources;

- (b) Initiate, encourage and give highest priority support to small and medium agribusiness enterprises and industries with linkages to agriculture. It shall ensure the allocation of adequate public investments to establish adequate support-agricultural infrastructure and facilities to sustain such ventures;
- (c) Formulate and implement product standards and regulatory rules that will ensure the production, processing, distribution and marketing of safe and globally-competitive products, and simultaneously promote environmental conservation; and
- (d) Ensure that all sectors involved in the [production, processing and marketing of food and non- food products shall strictly adhere to appropriate existing laws and regulations on the proper utilization and disposal of synthetic and chemical inputs and materials, and industrial and toxic wastes. Relative to this, the Regional Government shall pursue and encourage organic methods of agriculture in a day.

SEC. 111. ***Prevent Flight of Labor and Capital.*** – To promote investments and employment and to prevent flight of capital and labor from the region, the Regional Government shall adopt measures:

- (a) Against monopolies, cartels and unfair competition in public utilities, development, trading and similar concerns. It may, in the interest of regional welfare and security, establish and operate pioneering public utilities. Upon payment of just compensation, it may transfer the ownership of such utilities to cooperatives or other collective organizations; and
- (b) To initiate, encourage and support industrialization in the region, taking into account the culture and capabilities of the people of the area to control or manage their resources, the ecological needs of the area and the protection, conservation and development of resources.

SEC. 112. ***Eco-cultural Tourism.*** – Consistent with the preservation of cultural heritage and the protection of ecology, the Regional Government shall promote eco-cultural tourism in the region. Sites with historical, scientific, cultural significance including natural and man-made landmarks and scenic vistas shall likewise be preserved, maintained and protected.

SEC. 113. ***Promote Economic Zones.*** – The Regional Government shall encourage, promote and support the establishment and development of economic zones, industrial and trade centers, and airports, in strategic areas and growth centers in the region, including the necessary support infrastructure in accordance with land use and other environmental considerations.

SEC. 114. ***Marketing and Exportation of Indigenous Products.*** – The Regional Government shall, in coordination with local government units, encourage investments, development, marketing and exportation of indigenous and other local products in accordance with its development goals and priorities.

SEC. 115. ***Cooperatives.*** – The Regional Government shall promote cooperatives registered with the Cooperative Development Authority as tools for economic development, social justice, and people empowerment to initiate policies and develop mechanisms to enjoin the participation of the banking sector and financial institutions in the delivery of credit assistance for the establishment and building of rural enterprises and small-medium enterprises (SMEs).

ARTICLE XII

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, LANGUAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE AND SPORT

SEC. 116. *Regional Educational Policies.* – The Regional Government shall formulate educational policies to preserve, safeguard and develop cultural heritage guided by the following plans and programs:

- (a) The establishment of educational institutions, colleges and universities which shall enjoy fiscal and administrative autonomy but subject to regional laws. Existing educational institutions, colleges and universities shall continue to be governed by their respective charters;
 - (b) The development of curricular programs relevant to the preservation and development of cultural heritage and responsive to the social, economic, political and moral needs of the Cordillerans;
 - (c) The adoption and enactment of educational policies that shall recognize, support, develop and promote existing indigenous system of learning; and
 - (d) The creation of Regional Educational Board that will supervise, govern and intervene in the establishment, adoption and implementation of educational policies and programs of both formal and informal education for schools, colleges and universities in the region.

SEC. 117. *Education with Highest Budget Allocation.* – The Regional Government shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education.

SEC. 118. *Exemption from Taxes and Duties.* – Private educational institutions, colleges and universities shall enjoy the protection and support of the Regional Government. All revenues and assets of non-stock, non-profit educational institutions used actually, directly and exclusively for educational purposes shall be exempt from taxes and duties.

SEC. 119. *Creation of Regional Scholarship Committee for Education.* – The Regional Government shall assist the national government to provide free basic education and shall likewise endeavor to provide free tertiary education through scholarship programs, subsidies, research grants and other incentives to poor, gifted, and deserving individuals. Towards this end, there shall be created a Regional Scholarship Committee for Education.

SEC. 120. *Rights of Teachers and Parents to Organize.* – The right of teachers, employees, students and parents to organize themselves and to participate in school policy and decision-making shall be guaranteed.

SEC. 121. *Culture Sensitive Education.* – The educational system in the region shall develop a program, research, instruction and extension that will promote consciousness and appreciation of the ethnic identity of the people in the region and shall provide a better understanding of their cultural heritage for the attainment of national unity and harmony in all levels of education. It shall provide, promote, enhance or adopt a curriculum in all levels that includes Cordillera languages, customs and traditions and other indigenous knowledge systems and practices, as may be applicable.

SEC. 122. *State Colleges and Universities.* – State colleges and universities in the region shall form part of the regional educational sub-system of the autonomous region and shall

1 continue to enjoy fiscal and institutional autonomy, continue to be governed by their
2 respective charters and enjoy support of the Regional Government.

- (a) The Regional Government shall be represented in the board of regents or trustees in state universities and colleges in the region.
 - (b) The budget of state colleges and universities in the region while prepared separately shall form part the budget of the Regional Government when presented to congress for approval. The state colleges and universities shall continue to receive funding from the national government while the Regional Government shall provide additional funding.
 - (c) The Regional Government shall capacitate state colleges and universities in order to provide assistance to regional development.

12
13 SEC. 123. *School Charters.* – Subject to the general supervision of the Regional
14 Government, all schools with charters shall continue to be governed by their respective
15 charters.

SEC. 124. *Priority on Indigenous and Appropriate Technology.* – The management of scientific and indigenous research and appropriate technology on all levels of education including research institutions shall be given priority by the Regional Government.

20
21 SEC. 125. ***Intellectual Property Rights.*** – Incentives and safeguards for intellectual
22 property rights, and assistance in the registration of patents and copyrights shall be accorded
23 to Cordillera artists, writers, scientists, researchers and inventors.

24
25 SEC. 126. ***Medium of Instruction.*** – The Regional Government shall retain English and
26 Filipino as a medium of instruction in all levels of education. Consistent with its regional and
27 cultural identity, and whenever possible, it shall adopt a system of multi-lingual or mother
28 tongue-based approach in basic education to strengthen and enrich the various languages and
29 dialects in the region as well as the national language as maybe appropriate.

31 SEC. 127. ***Sports Development.*** – The Regional Government shall design and implement
32 sports development programs, and indigenous games and sports which shall be a cooperative
33 responsibility of the school, the community, and the government.

35 SEC. 128. ***Cultural Heritage Center.*** – The Regional Government shall establish a
36 Cordillera Commission for the Preservation and Promotion of Cultural Heritage to promote,
37 research, document, coordinate with other groups and institutions and establish and maintain
38 a data bank on all indigenous matters.

ARTICLE XIII

SOCIAL JUSTICE, HEALTH AND WELFARE

43 SEC. 129. ***Measures on Social Protection.*** – The Regional Government commits itself to
44 social protection and shall adopt measures to:

- (a) Empower and improve the quality of life of the poor, disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable individuals, families, sectors and communities of the region;
 - (b) Reduce or eradicate poverty to ensure that all Cordillerans are free from all forms of deprivation, vulnerability, and abuse;
 - (c) Create equal opportunities for assistance and protection for all Cordillerans;
 - (d) Promote gender and development (GAD) through the creation, adoption and sustainability of programs and policies that are gender sensitive; and

1 (e) Enact measures and develop programs that will protect the people from any threat of
2 violence and exploitation, eliminate trafficking in persons and mitigate pressures for
3 involuntary migration and servitude of persons, not only to support trafficked persons
4 but more importantly, to ensure their recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration into
5 the mainstream of society.

6

7 SEC. 130. ***Equality of Employment Opportunities.*** – The Regional Government shall
8 undertake steps to protect the labor sector and promote equality of employment opportunities
9 for all. Towards this end, it shall provide for:

- 10 (a) Participation of the Regional Government in the regional wage board in working out
11 periodic adjustments and rational standardization of compensation rates to ensure a
12 sustainable and decent wage for all workers;
13 (b) Profit sharing schemes that recognize the right of workers to a just share in the profits
14 of businesses, provide incentives thereof, and the right of the enterprise to reasonable
15 returns on investments;
16 (c) Protection of workers against unhealthy and unsafe working conditions; and
17 (d) Mandatory corporate social responsibility towards employees and host community.

18

19 SEC. 131. ***Hiring of Qualified Cordillerans.*** – The Regional Government shall promote
20 the hiring of qualified Cordillerans in government projects and private businesses located in
21 the autonomous region.

22

23 SEC. 132. ***Health as Basic Human Right.*** – The Regional Government recognizes health
24 as a basic human right and the attainment, maintenance and protection thereof shall be its
25 responsibility. It affirms health as an instrument for and a product of socio-economic
26 development. For this purpose, it shall, among other things:

- 27 (a) Establish, maintain, and support an effective health care delivery system utilizing
28 primary health care as a comprehensive and integrated approach;
29 (b) Ensure that the health care system is governed by the principles of service, social
30 justice and equity;
31 (c) Promote health knowledge and skills that will enable its people to take responsibility
32 for their health;
33 (d) Give relevant training and appropriate standards for health workers and professionals;
34 (e) Establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system which shall
35 provide for the adoption of an essential drug list, encourage the use of generic
36 medicines or drugs, and promote the use of herbal medicines and indigenous health
37 resources;
38 (f) Conduct research on traditional healing methods and promote indigenous health care
39 practices;
40 (g) Evolve financing schemes to effectively lessen the costs of health care without
41 sacrificing the quality of health care services; and
42 (h) Prioritize health by allocating at least 5% of the Regional Annual Budget to form the
43 base of health budget.

44

45 SEC. 133. ***Rights of Workers.*** – The Regional Government shall, in consonance with the
46 Constitution, guarantee the rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining
47 and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including those provided by law.

48

49 SEC. 134. ***Rights of Vulnerable Sectors.*** – The Regional Government shall:

- (a) Promote the well-being of differently-abled persons, the mentally handicapped, the elderly, the homeless, widowed and orphans, retirees, and veterans, adult offenders and children in conflict with the law and victims; and
 - (b) Assist victims of calamities, abused and depressed children and women in crisis situations, including victims of adult offenders and children in conflict with the law.

SEC. 135. *Program for Rebel Returnees.* – The Regional Government shall adopt a social integration program responsive to the needs of rebel returnees including adult offenders and children in conflict with the law.

SEC. 136. *Social and Insurance Measures.* – The Regional Government shall adopt insurance and social security measures responsive to the needs of its people to supplement existing privileges.

SEC. 137. *Housing Programs.* – The Regional Government, in cooperation with the private sector, shall promote housing programs where needed, which shall be financed under liberal credit terms and shall utilize indigenous materials, architecture and technology. Participation of housing cooperatives to administer the projects shall be encouraged.

SEC. 138. *Role of Cordilleran Women.* – The Regional Government shall recognize and strengthen the role of the Cordillera women in nation-building. It shall ensure the full implementation of the Magna Carta of Women and all other existing laws that promote the welfare and protection of women.

SEC. 139. *Comprehensive Program on Youth.* – The Regional Government shall establish a comprehensive program on youth development, create the structures to implement the same and appropriate adequate funds to provide support for the program.

SEC. 140. *Support to Peoples' Organization.* – The Regional Government shall promote and support duly established peoples' organizations and encourage the formation of organizations, especially those of the underprivileged.

ARTICLE XIV PEACE AND ORDER

SEC. 141. *Prohibition on Private Armies.* – The Regional Government shall promote and maintain peace and order and public safety in the region. It shall not allow private armies.

SEC. 142. *Defense of the Region.* – The defense and security of the autonomous region shall be the responsibility of the national government with due recognition to recommendations from the Regional Government.

SEC. 143. *Peace Keeping Programs.* – The Regional Government shall have co-management over peace-keeping programs and initiatives and undertake close coordination with the Philippine National Police as well as the Armed Forces of the Philippines and other National Law Enforcement Agencies.

SEC. 144. *Regional Emergency.* — The provisions of the preceding sections notwithstanding, the Regional Governor may request the President of the Philippines to call upon the Armed Forces of the Philippines:

- (a) To prevent or suppress lawlessness, violence, invasion or rebellion, when the public safety so requires, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;
 - (b) To suppress the danger to or breach of peace in the autonomous region, when the police forces of the autonomous region are not able to do so; and
 - (c) To avert any imminent danger to public order and security in the autonomous region.

SEC. 145. *Traditional Conflict Resolution.* – The Regional Government shall strengthen and enhance indigenous institutions or systems as may be applicable and found to be acceptable and effective in the promotion of social, political, economic and peace and order in the region. It shall provide for a system of incorporating indigenous practices in conflict resolution wherever and whenever applicable.

ARTICLE XV GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 146. *Text of the Organic Act.* – This Organic Act shall be officially promulgated in Filipino and English and translated into the languages widely spoken in the autonomous region. In case of conflict, the English text shall prevail.

SEC. 147. *Change of Name.* – The Regional Assembly may adopt a new name for the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera after public consultation.

SEC. 148. *Regional Symbol.* – The Regional Government shall have a regional flag, emblem and hymn.

ARTICLE XVI

PERSONAL, FAMILY, INDIGENOUS AND PROPERTY RELATIONS

SEC. 149. ***Customary Laws.*** – Customary laws affecting personal, family, tribal and property relations in the Cordillera shall be recognized.

SEC. 150. *Protection of the Family.* – The family as the basic unit of society shall be protected.

SEC. 151. *Indigenous Marriages.* – Marriages solemnized in accordance with the indigenous customary laws of the place shall be valid, and the dissolution of such marriages in accordance with these laws shall be recognized.

SEC. 152. *Indigenous Settlement of Disputes.* – Settlement of tribal, personal and family disputes shall be recognized. Acquisition and encumbrance of property done in accordance with customary practices, and settlement of disputes involving property rights and ownership shall be governed by the customary laws of the place where the property is located.

ARTICLE XVII

AMENDMENTS OR REVISIONS

SEC. 153. *Amendment or Revision.* – Any amendment to, or revision of this Act may be made by Congress upon recommendation of the majority of all members of the Regional Assembly.

1 SEC. 154. ***Effectivity of Amendment or Revision.*** – Any amendment to or revision of this
2 Organic Act shall become effective when ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a
3 plebiscite called for the purpose which shall be held not earlier than sixty (60) days nor later
4 than ninety (90) days after the approval of such amendment or revisions.

ARTICLE XVIII TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

SEC. 155. *Coverage of the Plebiscite.* – The coverage of the plebiscite shall be the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and the chartered City of Baguio. Any two or more provinces or cities voting favorably for this Organic Act in the plebiscite shall comprise the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera while those voting unfavorably for this Organic Act in the plebiscite shall remain within their current region.

15 SEC. 156. ***Election Date.*** – Unless otherwise provided by law, the date of election of
16 the first set of officials of the Regional Government shall be in the next local election
17 following the ratification of this Organic Act in the plebiscite. Subsequent elections shall
18 coincide with the nationwide local elections.

SEC. 157. Residency Requirement for the First Election. – For purposes of the first regional election, candidates must have actually resided and a registered voter in the region for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the election. Provided that they meet all other qualifications and none of the disqualifications under Article V of this Organic Act.

25 SEC. 158. ***Cessation of Administrative Offices.*** – Except for the regional line
26 agencies, the Cordillera Executive Board, the Cordillera Regional Assembly, and the
27 Cordillera Bodong Administration as a commission, created under Executive Order No. 220,
28 and the Cordillera Regional Development Council created by Executive Order No. 30 after
29 the de-activation of the above-mentioned Cordillera bodies, shall cease to exist immediately
30 upon the assumption of office of the Regional Governor.

32 SEC. 159. *Seat of the Regional Government.* – The seat of the Regional Government
33 shall be determined by the majority of all members of the Regional Assembly: Provided,
34 however, that the interim seat of the Regional Government shall be in the City of Baguio.

36 SEC. 160. *Oversight Committee.* – Within one (1) month from the organization of the
37 Regional Government, an Oversight Committee composed of the executive secretary as
38 Chairperson, the secretary of the Department of Budget and Management, the Cordillera
39 Regional Governor, the Regional Speaker of the Assembly, the Secretary of the Department
40 of the Interior and Local Government, the Chairperson of NCIP as members, shall be
41 organized for the purpose of supervising the transfer to the autonomous region of such
42 powers and functions vested in it by this Organic Act and the appropriations of the offices or
43 agencies including the transfer of properties, assets and liabilities, and all personnel of the
44 line agencies and government-owned or –controlled corporations that may be absorbed by the
45 Regional Government and, with respect to the latter, also the terms and conditions of their
46 turnover, without diminution of their compensation and other benefits. Provided, the salaries
47 of these absorbed personnel shall continue to be funded by the national government.

Within six (6) months after its organization, the oversight committee shall submit its report and recommendation to the President of the Philippines who shall act on the report and recommendations within ninety (90) days after receipt thereof: Provided, however, that if the

1 President fails to act within said period, the recommendations of the Oversight Committee
2 shall be deemed approved.

3

4 SEC. 161. ***Government Allocations.*** – Over and above the regularly given to Local
5 Government Units and regional line agencies, the national government shall continue its
6 annual allotment to the Regional Government. In addition, the national government shall
7 provide the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera an annual assistance of Ten billion pesos
8 (P10,000,000,000.00) for the first five (5) years and Five billion pesos (P5,000,000,000.00)
9 for the next five (5) years to be allocated in the following manner:

- 10 (a) Ninety percent (90%) of the annual subsidy for the Regional Government shall be
11 invested exclusively for revenue generating projects.
12 (b) Ten percent (10%) of the annual subsidy shall remain with the Regional Government
13 as Trust Fund.

14

15 SEC. 162. Fifty percent of the revenues generated mentioned in Sec. 160 (a) shall be
16 re-invested for income generating projects. The remaining revenues generated shall be
17 distributed as follows:

- 18 (a) Fifteen percent (15%) to the Regional Government;
19 (b) Thirty five percent (35%) to the Province/ highly urbanized city;

20

21 SEC. 163. ***Disclosure and Transparency.*** – Funds shall be available exclusively for
22 the specific purpose for which they have been appropriated. Any officer of the Autonomous
23 Region of the Cordillera whose duty permits or requires the possession, custody and
24 disbursement of the funds shall be accountable and responsible thereof. Financial records
25 shall be kept, audited and made public annually or as often as maybe necessary.

26

27 SEC. 164. ***Direct Release of LGUs Share.*** – The share of each local government unit
28 shall be released without need of any further action, directly to the provincial, city, municipal
29 or barangay treasurer, as the case may be on a quarterly basis within five (5) days after the
30 end of each quarter, and which shall not be subject to any lien or hold back that may be
31 imposed by the Regional Government for whatever purpose.

32

33 SEC. 165. ***Plebiscite.*** – The creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera
34 shall take effect when approved by a majority of the votes cast by the constituent units
35 provided in Section 3, Article II of this Act, in a plebiscite which shall be held not earlier than
36 three (3) months but not later than six (6) months after this Act takes effect: Provided, that
37 only the provinces and cities voting favorably in such plebiscite shall be included in the ARC.

38

39 The sum of Two billion six hundred ninety-five million (P2,695,000,000) is hereby
40 appropriated for the following purposes:

- 41 (a) Twenty million pesos (PhP20,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Regional Development
42 Council for the conduct of a well-coordinated inter-sectoral and inter-agency
43 Regional, Provincial, Municipal and Barangay information campaign on this Act.
44 (b) Seventy million pesos (PhP70,000,000.00) shall be equitably divided among the
45 provinces and the city for the conduct of IEC purposes.
46 (c) Twenty-Five million pesos (PhP25,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Commission on
47 Elections.
48 (d) Eighty million pesos (PhP80,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Regional Government
49 for its initial organizational requirements.
50 (e) Two billion five hundred million (P2,500,000,000) for the construction of the regional
51 government center.

1
2 Par (a) and (b) shall be released upon the effectivity of this Organic Act.
3

4 The Cordillera Development Council with the assistance of the Philippine Information
5 Agency, and in consultation with the provincial/city governments, the Cordillera Association
6 of Regional Executives, and other key stakeholders, shall determine the manner of
7 campaigning and the deputation of government agencies, non-government organizations and
8 other stakeholders for purposes of conducting a well-coordinated information campaign
9 within the first three months after the passage of this Act.

10 The amount of Two billion six hundred ninety-five million (P2,695,000,000) as herein
11 appropriated shall be charged against the contingent fund. Any deficiency thereof shall be
12 taken from any available funds of the national government.

13 SEC. 166. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Organic Act is declared
14 as invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining part or parts thereof not affected thereby shall
15 remain valid.

16 SEC. 167. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws inconsistent with this Organic Act are hereby
17 repealed or modified accordingly.

18 SEC. 168. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its
19 complete publication in the official gazette and in at least two (2) newspapers of nationwide
20 circulation.

21
22
23
24
25
26 Approved,