

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1977

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduced by Representatives
Estrellita B. Suansing and Horacio P. Suansing, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On February 23, 1995, Republic Act No. 7900, otherwise known as the "High Value Crops Development Act of 1995" was enacted. The law seeks to accelerate the growth and development of agriculture in the country, enhance productivity as well as profits of farmers and improve the country's investment climate, augmenting its foreign exchange earnings in the process.

Under the law, "High Value Crops" are crops other than the traditional crops, which include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) coffee and cacao; (b) fruit crops such as citrus, cashew, guyabano, papaya, mango, pineapple, strawberry, jackfruit, rambutan, durian, mangosteen, guava, lanzones, and watermelon; (c) root crops like potato and ubi; (d) vegetable crops such as asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, celery, carrots, cauliflower, radish, bell pepper, and patola; (e) legumes and pole sitaw like snap beans, garden pea; (f) spices and condiments such as black pepper, garlic, ginger, onion; and (g) cutflower and ornamental foliage plants like chrysanthemum, gladiolus, anthuriums, orchids, and statice.

Eighteen years after the passage of said law, there is an imperative need to amend the same in order to finally realize the objective of the law. Hence, this proposed bill.

The proposed amendment under Section 3 of RA No. 7900 intends to broaden even further the coverage of the application of the law as modern society, not surprisingly, is comprised of a lot more sectors/groups which could significantly contribute to the growth and development of agriculture in the country.

As to the proposed amendment under Section 5 of the same law, the bill aims to make use of the initiatives emanating not only from the government sector, but from the private sector, as well. Philippine society is replete with numerous private benefactors that are just so eager to share their wealth; much more if the initiative will contribute to benevolent deeds for the motherland.

Under Section 7 of yet the same law, the proposed bill envisages the inclusion of landholdings not covered under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). Although the concept will rely on the good graces of landowners pursuant to RA No. 7900's principle that land has a social function and land ownership has a social responsibility, still it bears noting that the legislative intent of developing the


country's agricultural sector, specifically "High Value Crops" products, would be more zealously addressed.


At the same time, the proposed bill envisions the landless farmers (beneficiaries of the amendment) to adopt a cooperative system in establishing economically-sized farms for high value crops farming. The farmer members shall collectively manage individual farms which include the contracting process, means of production, planning and coordinating crop varieties, and raising breed hectareage.

It is submitted that the amendments to RA No. 7900 as proposed by this bill will underscore further the obligation of owners and lessees of agricultural lands, as well as portions of landholdings not covered by CARP, among others, to cultivate the lands they own or lease and make the land economically productive in a sustainable and environment-friendly manner.

Needless to state, the proposed amendment will further heighten the development of high value crops resulting in a significantly more competitive free market, a more developed agriculture in general, improved investment climate, better competency and efficiency in agribusiness and capacity to develop high value crops as exporters, substantially expanding the foreign exchange earnings of the country as a consequence.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is highly recommended.


ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING
1st District, Nueva Ecija


HORACIO P. SUANSING, JR.
2nd District, Sultan Kudarat

This bill is a re-file of House Bill No. 1153 filed during the 16th Congress.

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SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

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House Bill No. _____

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AN ACT

**AMENDING SECTIONS 3, 5, AND 7 OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER 7900,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE HIGH VALUE CROPS DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1995
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7900, otherwise known as the High
2 Value Crops Development Act of 1995, is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 “Section 3. Scope of Application. – This Act shall cover, **BUT SHALL**
4 **NOT BE LIMITED TO**, upland dwellers as well as lowland tenant,
5 indigenous and cultural communities, Comprehensive Agrarian Reform
6 Program (CARP) beneficiaries, upland farm owners, farmers,
7 organization/associations/cooperatives, community associations and
8 farm workers, and to the extent herein provided, the departments,
9 offices, agencies, subdivisions, branches of instrumentalities in the
10 areas.”

11 **SECTION 2.** Section 5 of Republic Act No. 7900, otherwise known as the High
12 Value Crops Development Act of 1995, is hereby amended to read as follows:

13 “Section 5. Site Identification. – The Department of Agrarian Reform
14 and the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the
15 Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the municipal
16 government concerned, **ALONG WITH PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE**
17 **OR VOLUNTEERS**, shall identify the broad areas suitable for high
18 value crops production within six (6) months after the effectivity of this
19 Act. Provided, that such identification shall be reviewed at appropriate
20 intervals to ensure consistency with agrarian reform program and the
21 national land use policy.”

22 **SECTION 3.** Section 7 of Republic Act No. 7900, otherwise known as the High
23 Value Crops Development Act of 1995, is hereby amended to read as follows:

24 “Section 7. Farm Model. – For the program, [farmers may adopt]
25 **PORTIONS OF LARGE LANDHOLDINGS NOT COVERED UNDER THE**

1 **COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM (CARP) MAY BE**
2 **MADE AVAILABLE TO LANDLESS FARMERS FOR THE ADOPTION**
3 **OF** the cooperative system in putting up economically-sized farms for
4 high value crops farming. Farmers-members shall collectively manage
5 an individual farm which includes the contracting process and means
6 of production; planning and coordinating crop varieties; and raising
7 breed hectarage, distribution and some measures with reference to the
8 market it shall serve. Said farm models may be replicated by farmers'
9 organizations all over the country."

10 **SECTION 4. Repealing Clause.** All laws or parts thereof, decrees, orders, rules
11 and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
12 modified accordingly; Provided, however, That nothing in this Act shall be construed
13 or applied as amending the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and
14 other laws on Agrarian Reform.

15 **SECTION 5. Separability Clause.** If any of the provisions of this Act is declared
16 invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

17 **SECTION 6. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall be effective fifteen (15) days
18 after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

19 **Approved,**