

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1776

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RECEIVED

DATE: 20 JUL 2018

TIME: 2:47 PM

BY: [Signature]

REGISTRATION UNIT
BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE NANCY A. CATAMCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is undeniable that the Philippines remains primarily an agricultural nation inspite of efforts at industrialization. Of the 30 million hectares of the country, 47% is agricultural land. Thus, agriculture remains to be a principal source of income and employment of the Philippine economy. As of July, 2006, almost 35.6% of the labor force, roughly almost 12 million people, is employed in the agriculture industry.

Meanwhile, it is acknowledged globally that the Philippines is one of the pioneering nations in the field of agriculture industry. For instance, it is recognized that the College of Agriculture at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños, Laguna is a premiere institution for higher learning in agriculture in Asia. The IRRI, for instance, which is the frontliner in the field of rice production, housed in Los Banos, Laguna and is run predominantly by Filipino scientists.

Regrettably, while there is much available agricultural know-how in the country, their potential is not maximized because such agricultural technologies and techniques are not amply spread and shared throughout the whole country. It will be observed that various agriculture-based provinces are successful in their respective fields of agriculture while others are not.

For instance, having harnessed its potential in rubber production and processing, North Cotabato, is one of the country's leading producers of raw and semi-processed rubber, with markets in Asia and Europe. Likewise, North Cotabato, where an annual festival called the "Timpupo" (a Manobo word for harvest), is a known authority in growing high-value, export - quality fruits such as the pomelo, mangosteen, durian and marang.

In South Cotabato, multi-cropping techniques have been developed in its farming towns whereby farmers grow high-value crops such as coffee, pineapples and papayas between rows of coconut trees, thus raising their incomes above the poverty threshold. Kablon Farms, a private-owned local farm which practices multi-cropping system of high value crops and organic farming is frequently visited by students and researchers.

Also noteworthy are the fishpond technologies of Bulacan and Malabon, Metro Manila.

It is believed that the development experience of the above mentioned provinces, towns and other localities should be shared with, and transferred to, other areas in the country particularly in the depressed ones.

This bill, therefore, seeks to establish a countrywide agricultural technology sharing program to be known as "COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT SHARING PROGRAM", to be jointly implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA); Department of Science and Technology (DOST); and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

The Program is envisioned to encourage and promote agricultural technology transfer between and among the different municipalities, cities and provinces throughout the country in order that the innovative techniques and experiences in agriculture, fishery and livestock production development and successfully implemented in certain localities can be shared with other areas in the country to enable incomes and productivity to increase significantly.

The Program shall involve, among others, the conduct of a nationwide survey on farming, fishery and livestock technologies successfully developed and utilized in specific localities, and the provision by the government of necessary funding and services in order that such technologies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, are transferred to, and replicated in, other areas in the country.

Immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



NANCY A. CATAMCO

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AN ACT TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY SHARING AMONG PROVINCES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY TO ATTAIN THEIR FULLEST DEVELOPMENT AS SELF-RELIANT COMMUNITIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSE

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. - It is a declared policy of the House of the Representatives to promote agricultural development by providing the policy framework, public investments and support services needed to enhance the well-being of farmers, fishermen, livestock producers and other agricultural workers in order to increase their income, improve their living conditions, and maximized their contributions to the national economy.

SEC. 2. Technology Sharing Program. - To carry out the above policy, there is hereby established a countrywide agricultural technology sharing program to be known as "COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT SHARING PROGRAM", hereinafter referred to as the "Program".

The Program shall encourage and promote agricultural technology transfer between and among the different provinces, cities and municipalities throughout the country in order that the innovative techniques and experiences in agriculture, and fishery and livestock production developed and successfully implemented in specific localities, can be shared with other areas in the country, particularly in the depressed localities.

SEC. 3. Implementing Agencies. - The Program shall be jointly implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

SEC. 4. Program Components; Responsibilities of Agencies. - The Department of Agriculture as lead agency shall, with the active collaboration of the DOST and the DILG, discharge the following functions and responsibilities:

a) Conduct, coordinate, and disseminate research studies on appropriate technologies for the improvement and development of agricultural crops, fisheries, livestock, and other allied commodities by optimizing the use of resource;

b) Promote the development of indigenous techniques and adaption in farming, fishing and livestock production;

c) Provide extension services and assistance in agricultural development as may be needed by local government units; and

d) Conduct a nationwide survey on farming, fishery and livestock technologies successfully developed and utilized in specific localities and provide the necessary funding and services in order that such technologies, to the extent applicable and appropriate, are shared with, and transferred to, other areas in the country in order to increase incomes and productivity of the farmers and the economy.

SEC. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be promulgated by the agencies mentioned in Section 3 hereof within thirty (30) days from effectivity of the Act.

SEC 6. Appropriation. - To finance the initial implementation of the Program, the sum of FIFTY MILLION PESOS (P50,000,000.00) is hereby allocated to be charged equally against the current appropriations of the Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology and the Contingent Fund, as provided in the General Appropriations Act for 2010. Thereafter, such amount as may be determined and necessary for the continued operation of the Program establish under this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Agriculture under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,