

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4497



Introduced by **Representative Christian S. Unabia**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The local government units (LGUs) play a significant role in the modernization of our country's agricultural industry. In fact, local agricultural development has intensified with the devolution of some functions of the Department of Agriculture to LGUs. The reality, however, is that there are wide income disparities among LGUs, especially among LGUs that have vast rural areas. Unfortunately, with this disparaging income disparities, poorer LGUs whose internal revenue allotment (IRA) are oftentimes also smaller become restricted in availing programs, which are purposely created to aid them in developing and modernizing their agricultural industries due to certain provisions of Republic Act No. 8435, otherwise known as the "*Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997*" or AFMA.

AFMA is a landmark legislation that serves as an integral framework in pursuing the state policy of agricultural modernization including fisheries sector. However, the second paragraph of its Section 52, particularly requires that for purposes of farm-to-market roads, the LGUs shall "*provide a counterpart of not less than ten percent (10%) of the project cost subject to their IRA level.*" Inevitably, this provision limits low-income LGUs to initiate and avail of agricultural development programs such as farm-to-market roads. As expected, this results in the delay in the modernization and reforms in their respective localities. This particular provision, thus, directly runs counter to the policies and objectives by which AFMA was principally enacted.

Accordingly, this bill proposes to repeal the said provision as stated in the second paragraph under Section 52, consistent with AFMA's declared policy that "*The goals of the national economy are a more equitable distribution of opportunities, income and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services produced by the nation for the benefit of the people; and an expanding productivity as the key to raising the quality of life for all, especially the underprivileged.*"

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


CHRISTIAN S. UNABIA

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AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 52 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8435, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE "AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION ACT OF 1997."

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

SECTION 1. The second paragraph under Section 52 of Republic Act No. 8435, otherwise known as "*The Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997*" is hereby repealed. Section 52 is accordingly amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 52. *Farm-to-Market Roads.* – The Department shall coordinate with the LGUs and the resident-farmers and fisherfolk in order to identify priority locations of farm-to-market roads that take into account the number of farmers and fisherfolk and their families who shall benefit there from and the amount, kind and importance of agricultural and fisheries products produced in the area."

SECTION 2. All laws, rules and regulations, orders, memoranda or circulars inconsistent with this Act are hereby revoked, repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved.