

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. B. No. 4532

Introduced by Rep. Vilma Santos-Recto
6th District of Batangas

**AN ACT
DESIGNATING THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE NATIONAL
IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4
OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is a government-owned and controlled corporation primarily responsible for irrigation development and management. It was created under Republic Act (RA) 3601 in 1963. Its charter was amended by Presidential Decree (PD) 552, s. 1974 and PD 1702, s. 1980. Both increased the capitalization and broadened the authority of the Agency. NIA aims to construct, operate and maintain irrigation systems consistent with integrated water resource management principles to improve agricultural productivity and increase farmers' income. NIA envisions that by 2020, it wholly transforms into a professional and efficient irrigation agency contributing to the inclusive growth of the country and in the improvement of the farmers' quality of life.

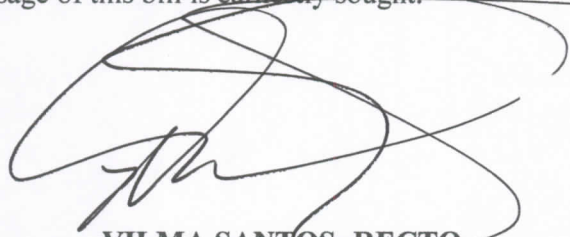
NIA was placed under the Office of the President (OP) upon its creation. Subsequently, it was attached to the Department of Public Works, Transportation, and Communication by virtue of PD 1, s. 1972. Fifteen (15) years after, the Administrative Code of 1987 attached NIA to both the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and Department of Agriculture (DA). Despite the said Administrative Code, NIA remained attached to DPWH. It was transferred back to OP in 1992 pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 22. A month after, it was attached to DA under Administrative Order No. 17 dated 14 October 1992. Again, in 2014, EO No. 165 transferred NIA together with the National Food

Authority, Philippine Coconut Authority, and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority to the Office of the President and consequently designating the Presidential Assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization as chairman of the respective governing bodies of the abovementioned agencies. In a memorandum dated 3 November 2016 of the Executive Secretary, the Cabinet Secretary was designated as the Acting Chairman of the NIA Board of Directors.¹

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, who, back in 2016 wanted NIA along with the National Food Authority, Philippine Coconut Authority and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority to be reintegrated back to the DA, said that there was “absolutely no sense in separating the NFA, NIA, FPA and PCA from the DA.”² What is worse is that the Secretary of Agriculture is not even part of the current NIA governing board.

Thus, this bill seeks to correct the current composition of the NIA governing board by mandating the Secretary of Agriculture to sit as its *ex-officio* Chairperson to ensure the coordination and harmonization of NIA’s programs and policies to the agriculture industry’s overall strategic development.

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



VILMA SANTOS- RECTO

¹ National Irrigation Administration. *Legislations*. Information retrieved on April 12, 2018 from <http://www.nia.gov.ph/?q=content/legislations>

² Manila Times (July 6, 2016). *Good—NIA, NFA and PCA again under Agriculture Department*. Information retrieved from <http://www.manilatimes.net/good-nia-nfa-and-pca-again-under-agriculture-department/272148/> on April 5, 2018.

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OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED

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

1 Section 1. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 3601, as amended is hereby further amended
2 to read as follows:

3 "Sec. 4. Board of Directors. The powers and functions of the National
4 Irrigation Administration shall be exercised by a Board of Directors
5 composed of six members, to wit: The Secretary of [~~Public Works,~~
6 ~~Transportation and Communications~~] **AGRICULTURE**, who shall be the
7 [~~Chairman~~] **CHAIRPERSON**, the Administrator of the National Irrigation
8 Administration, who shall be the Vice-~~[Chairman]~~ **CHAIRPERSON**, the
9 Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority, the
10 Secretary of [~~Agriculture~~] **PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS**, the
11 General Manager of the National Power Corporation, and one member who
12 shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines on recommendation of
13 any national rice and corn organization of good standing and who shall serve
14 for a term of four years unless sooner removed.

15 x x x."

1 Sec. 2. *Repealing clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations which are
2 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

3 Sec. 3. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
4 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved,