

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. **3013**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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**Introduced by Representative Rico B. Geron**

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### **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 on 22 June 1963. Its charter was amended by Presidential Decree (PD) 552 on 11 September 1974 and PD 1702 on 17 July 1980.

Under Section 2 (c) of Republic Act 3601, NIA is empowered to collect from the users of each irrigation system ample rates as deemed necessary for the continuous operation of the system subject for reimbursement for a period not more than twenty five (25) years. Poorest farmers could not afford to have a decent meal for the day or submit their children to school, thus, these irrigation services should be rendered free of charge.

This Bill seeks to establish free irrigation programs and services for our small farmers. This is a great potential of small scale irrigation in the Philippines given that the vast majority of small holder farmers still depend on rain fed agriculture despite high seasonal and inter annual rainfall variability.

People will become enthusiastic as they look forward to improve their living condition. This will provide a chain of benefits starting from the farmer households who are direct beneficiaries of the irrigation projects extending to the community and neighboring barangays through creation of farm jobs or other employment. It also strengthens the cooperation and unit of people to communally manage the irrigation project.

Approval of this bill earnestly sought.



**RICO B. GERON**

AGAP Partylist Representative



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**AN ACT PROVIDING AGRICULTURAL FARMERS AND FARMER BENEFICIARIES FREE IRRIGATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, REPEALING SECTION 2, PARAGRAPH (C) OF REPUBLIC ACT 3601 AS AMENDED BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 552 AND ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the **FREE IRRIGATION ACT OF 2016**.

**SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** The State shall promote comprehensive rural development in rural areas throughout the country in improving the quality of life and economic wellbeing of the people through education and physical infrastructure for irrigation which are free and efficient to increase production and profitability.

**SECTION 3. *Free Irrigation Program and Services.*** Any provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding, all irrigation system built, operated and maintained by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), Department of Agriculture (DA), or any government agencies, or those turned over and maintained or operated by farmers, associations, and/or organizations shall be free of use and charge.

**Section 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture (DA) with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) shall formulate and promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

**Section 5. *Separability Clause.*** If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid and effective.

Section 6. *Appropriations.* The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged to the budget of Department of Education and Commission of Higher Education as provided in General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, the necessary sum for the implementation of this Act shall be provided in the subsequent General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* ---- All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 5. *Effectivity.* ---- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette.

Approved.