

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3382

Introduced by **ENGR. CARLITO S. MARQUEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks the establishment of the Piña Handloom Weaving Development Program (PHWDP) by creating the training center to help boost the country's beleaguered piña handloom weaving industry in the country and to improve the competitiveness of its products.

There is more to the western part of Panay than Boracay. In fact, there are many interesting places in the provinces of Aklan, Antique and western Iloilo that just amaze without driving all the way to Caticlan. Ruins, churches, food and rowdy festivals are there waiting. Aklan is proud of its *piña* (pineapple) fiber. So much so that products derived from processing these fibers into fabrics is one, if not its top export industry: *barong tagalog* and *baro't saya*, the Philippines' national dress for men and women, worn by presidents and celebrities; bags and mats; shawls and other *Filipiniana* items that are prized by tourists and designers here and abroad.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RECEIVED

DATE: 30 AUG 2016

TIME: 4:30 PM

BY: JLN

REGISTRATION UNIT
BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE

It is a whole cottage industry that has given hope to idle wives and retirees and poor families that derive their income from preparing, weaving, making products from *piña* fibers. It is even safe to say that in many towns in the province, there is a community of weavers and craftsmen busily meeting an order.

Piña-weaving in Aklan is an age-old tradition handed down from generations. It dates back during the Spanish colonial era. In the 1970's, demand for products from *piña* fibers was realized and from that time, when Aklan started its own industry by having government agencies train Aklanons to fuel the local economy. In fact, Aklan is known as the Piña Fiber capital of the Philippines. Kalibo's piña cloth was said to be traded during the Pre-Hispanic times and reached as far as Greece and Egypt during its heyday.

There is no finer and more elegant fiber for the Barong Tagalog than piña fabric. Known as the Queen of Philippine Fabric, the piña fiber is extracted by hand from the leaves of the native pineapple. Each strand is painstakingly knotted by hand and loom woven manually to produce piña cloth that is soft, and usually in ivory color.

The traditional loom weaving industry endures as a source of income and livelihood in this town as residents continuously sustain it despite the occurrence of several modern cloth-making technologies. Thousands of Filipinos are employed in the industry in various capacities. For many marginalized people living in and

on the fringes of the piña handloom weaving, particularly indigenous people, piña weaving provides an opportunity to earn cash. Weaving and embroidery jobs enable women, especially, to earn salaries that allow them to be home rather than being forced to travel abroad to become domestic workers. Since piña fabric is hand loomed by only a few weavers, it is very precious and scarce, which also makes it expensive. Piña cloth is simple and elegant. Products created are considered a work of love and patience. Therefore, a piña garment is considered as an heirloom.

Training weavers is difficult, however, since it requires meticulous patience and dedicated practice. Despite the importance of this handloom industry, the industry is in decline. The government also fails in its support for the industry despite the presence of RA 3470 (*An Act Creating the National Cottage Industries Development Authority*). It failed to organize, revive, encourage, and promote the establishment of piña handloom weaving industry. When craft dies, it is not only the artisans and their businesses that die. With its demise crashes an entire history, legacy, tradition and knowledge.

The PHWDP embodies core programs such as the Investment Promotion and Facilitation; Production Support and Extension; Research and Development; Market Promotion and Development; and the program on Infrastructure Development for the enhancement of the industry.

Under the bill, the PHWDP is designated to be the lead agency responsible for strengthening the collaboration of the various piña handloom weaving industry players and for engineering the development of the piña fiber sector with the objective of reducing poverty and alleviating living conditions at the community level.

The measure directs the PHWDP to maintain a Pinya Handloom and Weaving Information Center, which shall principally serve as the museum, library and digital repository of all information pertaining to piña weaving.

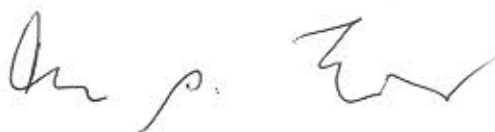
The PHWDP is likewise mandated to create and maintain its own website that will feature the development of piña weaving in the Philippines, a periodic update and reports on the piña weaving project undertaken by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and information focusing on Philippine piña weaving designs and other relevant market information.

As piña fiber weaving gains momentum, thousands of jobs for weavers are created. The key is to increase profits for the local weavers. Global fashion designers are always searching for innovative materials and new ideas to give them an edge in the industry. Piña handloom weaving has the potential to greatly influence fashion. To date though, adequate support for the industry remains a challenge. The government and consumers can play a pivotal role in the re-introduction of piña fabric weaving. This can be further accomplished through the continued efforts of local organizations such

as TESDA, PTRI, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Advocate of Philippine Fair Trade, and the Aklan Piña Manufacturers & Traders Association. By continually re-introducing piña to the world through such efforts as the Aklan's Fiber Festival and annual feature presentations in Manila fashion shows, the world is beginning to wake from its sleep. However, piña has yet to secure a global presence. Through the return to their ethnic roots and age-old traditions, the piña salvation is just the beginning to enter the limelight. Businesses are striving to meet current export orders to Japan, Hong Kong, USA, France and UK. International awareness, promotion and marketing of piña cloth will help change the regions economy by putting piña fabric weaving industry on the map.

This will lead to huge potential and economic rewards for indigenous weavers, their families, and their communities. It will raise the standard of living and benefit the country. As yet, though, local profit margins are small, and are likely to remain so until they can propel themselves into the world marketplace. In order to fully revive this traditional industry, cooperatives need to work together for development, funding and international fair trade.

Immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ENGR. CARLITO "Lito" MARQUEZ

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3382

Introduced by **ENGR. CARLITO S. MARQUEZ**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE PIÑA
HANDLOOM WEAVING TRAINING CENTER IN
THE PROVINCE OF AKLAN, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Creation. - There shall be established in the Province of Aklan, the Philippine Piña Handloom Weaving Training Center that will be the overseer of the Piña Handloom Weaving Development Program (PHWDP).

The seat of the Training Center shall be constructed in Kalibo, Aklan.

SECTION 2. Mandate. - The Center is hereby mandated to promote the accelerated growth and development of the Philippine Piña Handloom Weaving Training Industry in all its aspects through research and development (R&D), production support, extension

support, education and training, fiber processing and utilization technologies, standards implementation and trade regulation.

SECTION 3. *Supervision of the Center.* – The Center shall be under the management, operation, control and direct supervision of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) by virtue of RA 7796, in cooperation with the Philippine Textile Research Institute by virtue of RA 4086, and the Department of Trade and Industry by virtue of RA 3470, who shall appoint an Executive Director.

The personnel of the Center shall be subject to the staffing pattern as deemed fit by the Implementing Rules of this Act, in consonance with the civil service rules.

The Executive Director shall collaborate with and tap the resources of all line agencies of the government in the establishment, management and operation of the Center.

SECTION 4. *Purposes and Objectives.* – This Act, in consonance of the mandate, shall have the following objectives:

- (a) Organize, revive, encourage, and promote the establishment of piña handloom weaving industry;
- (b) Formulate and implement, in cooperation with related agencies, integrated programs and comprehensive policy guidelines for the accelerated development of the piña handloom weaving industry as a whole;
- (c) Undertake research and support to production, processing and marketing of piña handloom

products in both the domestic and international markets when necessary;

- (d) Administer and regulate in accordance with law, the licensing and registration of piña weavers, producers, artists, designers, cooperatives, trade participants and/or partner sectors;
- (e) Strengthen the collaboration of the various piña handloom industry players and engineering the development of the piña fiber sector with the objective of reducing poverty and alleviating living conditions at the community level;
- (f) Promote the effective merchandising of products in domestic and foreign market so that those engaged in such industry will be placed on a basis of economic security and towards this end the Center itself may, if necessary, market the products for the producers and weavers;
- (g) Promote the standardization of products, prescribe rules and regulations governing the grading, classifying, and inspecting of especially those for export;
- (h) Grant small loans under such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Center or arrange for necessary loans with public or private credit institutions and banks, including such other loans intended for the planting, cultivation, and production of needed raw materials for the industry covered under this Act;
- (i) Extend assistance to producers and weavers in their problems relating to financing, production and marketing;

- (j) Render consultation services, provide technical know-how and field assistance to producers and weavers;
- (k) Undertake research and training programs designed to improve the piña fiber woven-products;
- (l) Maintain a Piña Handloom and Weaving Information Center, which shall principally serves as the museum, library and digital repository of all information pertaining to piña weaving;
- (m) Create and maintain its own website that will feature the development of piña weaving in the Philippines, a periodic update and reports on the piña weaving project undertaken by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and information focusing on Philippine piña weaving designs and other relevant market information; and
- (n) To adopt such measures as may be deemed necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of this Act.

Section 5. Definition of Terms.-

- (a) "*Cottage industry*" refers to an economic activity in a small scale which is carried on mainly in the homes or in other places for profit and which is mainly done with the help of the members of the family;
- (b) "*Cottage products*" shall mean products produced by cottage industries and shall be labeled as "*Cottage Products Made in the Philippines*"; and
- (c) "*Piña handloom weaving*" refers to the ancestral practice of preparing, weaving, making products from *piña* fibers;

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*- TESDA, in consultation with PTRI and DTI, within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Report of Sample Products.*- Within one year after the organization of the PHWDP and from time to time thereafter, it shall furnish the Department of Trade and Industry with a list and samples of items produced by the pinya handloom weaving industry and thereafter the DTI shall give priority in the procurement of these products for government use.

SECTION 8. *Producers and Marketing Cooperatives.*- The Center shall stimulate the organization and establishment of producers, weavers, artists, designers and marketing cooperatives in coordination with the activities of the Cooperative Development Authority and train and develop a competent management pool for the operation of producers, weavers, artists, designers and marketing cooperatives for the industry.

SECTION 9. *Tax Exemption.*- The production, manufacture and sale of piña handloom woven products shall be exempt from all taxes for a period of ten (10) years from the date of registration of the person or firm engaged in the production or manufacture of the products with the Center, subject likewise to the grants and privileges of the Barangay Micro-Business Enterprise Law (RA 9178).

All stakeholders who shall register under this Act shall, in lieu of the taxes herein exempted, be assessed and shall pay a special tax of one per centum of their gross sales as defined by the National Internal Revenue Code, to be paid in the same manner and at the same time subject to the same penalties and surcharges as the sales tax, which shall constitute a Special Piña Fiber Handloom Weaving Fund.

Any person, partnership, cooperative, company or corporation eligible to tax exemption privileges under this Act and enjoying tax exemption under other existing laws shall continue to enjoy the privileges under this Act.

SECTION 10. *Penalties and Fines.* – Any violation of this Act or of the rules and regulations issued hereunder, and any misrepresentation of any essential fact required by the said rules or of taxable net income, shall subject the offender to cancellation of his registration by the Center, to payment of twice the amount of duties and taxes involved plus all penalties and surcharges and/or imprisonment of not less than One Hundred Thousand pesos nor more than Five Hundred Thousand pesos, or both, depending on the discretion of the court.

In case the offense is committed by a juridical person for partnerships, corporation, cooperatives or other entities, the president, manager or person in charge thereof shall be criminally responsible therefor.

SECTION 11. *Appropriations.* – The TESDA Director shall include in the Authority's subsidy program, support for the capital outlay requirements of the said Center an

amount of Three Hundred Million pesos (Php300,000,000.00) for the preliminary implementation of this Act which shall be taken from the budget of TESDA for the current fiscal year. Hereafter, the necessary amount to carry out the purposes of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamation and administrative regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect immediately after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved.