

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 6869

BY REPRESENTATIVES ROMUALDEZ (Y.M.), ROMUALDEZ (F.M.), OLIVAREZ, YAP (E.), CASTRO (F.L.), MERCADO, MARCOLETA, SACDALAN, RODRIGUEZ, TAN (S.A.) AND NIETO, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 339

AN ACT CREATING THE EASTERN VISAYAS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EVDA), DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Eastern Visayas
2 Development Authority (EVDA) Act”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State
4 to promote and accelerate the sound and balanced industrial, economic and social
5 growth of Eastern Visayas and ensure its speedy rehabilitation in the aftermath of
6 typhoon Haiyan by increasing trade, tourism, and investments, encouraging private
7 enterprise, and advancing efforts towards progress and development within the
8 context of national plans and policies in order to provide jobs to the people, especially
9 those in rural areas, increase their productivity and their individual and family
10 incomes, and thereby improve the quality of their living conditions.

11 Towards this end, an effective institutional mechanism shall be established in
12 order to address the need for a coordinated and integrated approach in the
13 formulation and implementation of plans, programs, and projects geared towards
14 economic growth and development in the Eastern Visayas region, including the
15 establishment, among others, of special economic zones.

16 **SEC. 3. Creation** - The Eastern Visayas Development Authority, hereinafter
17 referred to as the Authority, is hereby created, which shall promote, coordinate and
18 facilitate the active and extensive participation of all sectors in the socioeconomic
19 development of Eastern Visayas.

1 **SEC. 4. Coverage** - The Authority shall cover all the provinces of Northern
2 Samar, Eastern Samar, Western Samar, Leyte, Biliran and Southern Leyte, the
3 independent City of Ormoc and the highly urbanized City of Tacloban.

4 **SEC. 5. Main Office**.- The Authority shall have its main office in Tacloban
5 City. It may establish other satellite offices in Metro Manila and in other provinces
6 within Eastern Visayas, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of this Act. The
7 Authority shall have a term of fifty (50) years from the effectivity of its Act,
8 renewable for the same period unless otherwise provided by law.

9 **SEC. 6. Purpose**.– The Authority shall have the following purposes and
10 objectives:

- 11 (a) To promote the development of Eastern Visayas by initiating or undertaking,
12 by itself or otherwise, development and business projects of corporate,
13 economic nature whether in agriculture, power, infrastructure, energy,
14 public utilities, land development, manufacturing, exploration or utilization
15 of natural resources and other fields or projects;
- 16 (b) To integrate government and private sector efforts and resources in the
17 pursuit of sustainable development and balanced growth of Eastern
18 Visayas, as proposed in the post-Haiyan rehabilitation plan and other
19 relevant development plans, programs and projects;
- 20 (c) To facilitate investments in any field as would enhance the economic
21 development of the region;
- 22 (d) To provide a model for the full implementation of a comprehensive regional
23 industrialization and agricultural modernization policy.

26 **SEC. 7. Powers and Functions of the Authority**. –The Authority shall
27 have the following powers and functions:

- 28 (a) Formulate an integrated development framework for Eastern Visayas that
29 is, as far as practicable, consistent with the peace and development
30 initiatives of the national government;
- 31 (b) Provide strategic direction for the long-term economic development of
32 Eastern Visayas;
- 33 (c) Integrate, prioritize, program, and implement, whenever allowed and
34 authorized by applicable laws, specific programs, activities and projects
35 within Eastern Visayas, including Official Development Assistance (ODA)
36 projects, subject to such limitations prescribed by existing laws, rules, and
37 regulations;

- 1 (d) Recommend to and, whenever necessary, call upon the appropriate
2 agencies of the national government and any of its instrumentalities, to lend
3 the necessary technical support for, assistance and prioritization in the
4 implementation of agricultural, industrial, commercial, infrastructure,
5 environmental, tourism and technological programs and projects;
- 6
- 7 (e) Advocate to the constituents of Eastern Visayas, their elected
8 representatives in Congress, and the national government, policies that will
9 foster the integrated and balanced development of Eastern Visayas;
- 10
- 11 (f) Promote and facilitate investments in any field that would enhance the
12 socioeconomic development of Eastern Visayas and uplift the living
13 standards of the people in close coordination with agencies primarily
14 mandated to undertake such functions;
- 15
- 16 (g) Explore sources for financing priority programs, projects, and activities that
17 are critical to the development of Eastern Visayas;
- 18
- 19 (h) Coordinate and facilitate the extension of necessary planning,
20 management, and technical assistance to prospective and existing
21 investors, to complement the efforts of agencies primarily mandated to
22 execute such functions;
- 23
- 24 (i) Establish a comprehensive and integrated database on Eastern Visayas to
25 support planning and decision making;
- 26
- 27 (j) Perform prior screening functions, as a condition precedent to the approval
28 by any national, provincial, or municipal government agency, of any permit,
29 license, lease, franchise, or concession for the operation of any business or
30 the exploitation, development, or utilization of natural resources within
31 Eastern Visayas;
- 32
- 33 (k) Negotiate and enter into management or consulting contracts with local or
34 foreign management consulting firms for the management of the Authority
35 or the planning and implementation of agricultural, tourism, and industrial
36 development projects in Eastern Visayas;
- 37
- 38 (l) Avail of the expertise of any particular employee, technician, or group of
39 persons in any bureau, office, or department of the national government
40 whose services are deemed urgently needed for the attainment of the goals
41 of the Authority, with the consent and approval of the department head
42 concerned;
- 43

- 1 (m)Conduct scientific experiments, investigation, and research to discover
2 economical and practical methods of increasing agricultural and industrial
3 production and other related endeavors;
- 4
- 5 (n) Encourage, and organize cooperative ventures in agriculture, agri-business,
6 industry, tourism and commerce and assist them by arranging appropriate
7 financing schemes, for their plans and projects;
- 8
- 9 (o) Monitor, evaluate, and formulate recommendations in the implementation of
10 Eastern Visayas-wide development programs, activities and projects;
- 11
- 12 (p) Establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the timely implementation of
13 Eastern Visayas-wide projects, whenever necessary, including public-
14 private partnership;
- 15
- 16 (q) Review and recommend for approval by the National Economic and
17 Development Authority (NEDA) Board programs, projects, and plans by the
18 national government and donor agencies for implementation in Eastern
19 Visayas, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;
- 20
- 21 (r) Recommend the creation and supervise the development and operation of
22 special economic zones according to the principles and provisions set forth
23 in this Act and Republic Act No. 7916, or the Special Economic Zone Act of
24 1995, as amended ;
- 25
- 26 (s) Interface with foreign assistance agencies and international aid
27 organizations, in coordination with the NEDA and other relevant national
28 government agencies, for the purposes of obtaining financing support,
29 grants and donations for its programs and projects;
- 30
- 31 (t) Receive and administer donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts,
32 in cash or in kind, from foreign governments, international agencies, private
33 entities and other sources, including ODA, to be used in the development of
34 Eastern Visayas, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;
- 35
- 36 (u) To sue and be sued, enter into contracts, acquire, purchase, hold, lease,
37 transfer, and dispose of property of any kind or nature to carry out the
38 purposes of this Act; and
- 39
- 40 (v) Discharge other functions that may be deemed necessary or as may be
41 provided by law.

42 In the discharge of its functions, the Authority shall ensure appropriate
43 consultation and coordination with the Regional Development Council Eastern
44 Visayas (RDC-EV) and other local development councils as well as with national

1 government agencies, local government units, accredited people's organizations,
2 non-government organizations and the private sector operating in Eastern Visayas.

3 The Authority, through the EVDA Chairperson, shall submit to the President
4 of the Philippines and both Houses of Congress annual reports on its
5 accomplishments and activities.

6 **SEC. 8. *Board of Directors*.** – The Authority's overall directions and thrusts
7 shall be provided and approved, unless provided otherwise in this Act, by the EVDA
8 Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board. It shall be composed of
9 the following members:

- 10 (a) The EVDA Chairperson as head;
- 11
- 12 (b) The Chairperson of the Regional Development Council of Eastern Visayas
13 (RDC-EV) as *ex officio* member;
- 14
- 15 (c) A member of the Senate, upon designation by the Senate President, who
16 shall be an *ex officio* member;
- 17
- 18 (d) A member of the House of Representatives, chosen by the District
19 Representatives of the legislative districts comprising Eastern Visayas, who
20 shall be an *ex officio* member;
- 21
- 22 (e) The Regional President of the League of Municipalities-Eastern Visayas
23 Chapter;
- 24
- 25 (f) Three (3) private sector representatives to be appointed by the President,
26 upon the recommendation of the Board comprising of one (1) representative
27 each from the:
 - 28 1. Eastern Visayas business sector;
 - 29 2. Eastern Visayas academic sector; and
 - 30 3. Eastern Visayas non-government sector.

31 The term of office of the three (3) representatives from the private sector
32 shall be six (6) years: *Provided*, That at the initial appointment of such members,
33 the second member to be appointed shall only serve a term of four (4) years and
34 the third member to be appointed shall only serve a term of two (2) years: *Provided*,
35 *further*, That they shall continue to hold office until their successors shall have been
36 appointed. All vacancies, prior to the expiration of the term, shall be filled for the
37 unexpired term only.

38 The members of the Board shall be entitled to reimbursements for actual
39 and necessary expenses incurred, either for their attendance in the meetings of

1 the Board or in connection with other official business authorized by resolution of
2 the Board, subject to existing laws and regulations.

3 The term of the *ex officio* members including the Senator and the Member
4 of the House of Representatives shall correspond to their term as elected officials.

5 **SEC. 9. Functions of the Board of Directors.** – The Board shall have the
6 following functions:

- 7 (a) Provide direction and guidance for the Authority's work and thrusts for
8 Eastern Visayas;
- 9
- 10 (b) Ensure that the goals and policies of the Authority are consistent with the
11 overall national development goals and objectives;
- 12
- 13 (c) Ensure that the programs of the Authority are consistent with regional and
14 local development plans, programs and projects and vice versa;
- 15
- 16 (d) Explore sources for financing of priority Eastern Visayas-wide development;
- 17
- 18 (e) Create committees or task forces as may be deemed necessary in for the
19 accomplishment of the plans, programs, projects and activities of the
20 Authority;
- 21
- 22 (f) Determine schedules, establish voting procedures, criteria for the
23 constitution of a quorum and other rules and regulations in the conduct of
24 Board meetings; and
- 25
- 26 (g) Perform such functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of
27 this Act.

28 **SEC. 10. Executive Committee.** – The Board shall constitute an Executive
29 Committee from among its membership to act, for and on its behalf when the Board
30 is not in session, on urgent matters as may be deemed necessary by the
31 Chairperson.

32 The following shall comprise the Executive Committee:

- 33 (a) The EVDA Chairperson as head;
- 34
- 35 (b) The Eastern Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC) Chairperson;
- 36
- 37 (c) The Private Sector Representative from the business sector;
- 38
- 39 (d) The Private Sector Representative from the academic sector; and
- 40

(e) The Private Sector Representative from the non-government sector.

SEC. 11. Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer. – The EVDA Chairperson shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the rank of Undersecretary and shall act as Chief Executive Officer of the Authority. The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer shall serve a term of six (6) years from the date of appointment unless removed for cause: *Provided*, That the person who shall be appointed as Chairperson must be a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of proven probity and integrity and a holder of a degree in economics, business, public administration, law, management or related fields, and with at least five (5) years relevant experience preferably in the field of management or public administration: *Provided, further*, That the appointee for Chairperson shall have been a resident of Eastern Visayas for at least (5) years before the appointment.

The Chairperson shall have the following duties and functions:

- (a) Call and preside over meetings of the Board and see to it that the policies, programs and rules and regulations are implemented properly;
 - (b) Call on technical experts in the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated development plan for Eastern Visayas, investment programs and the preparation of investment programming priorities, annual reports and other pertinent documents approved by the Authority;
 - (c) Identify solutions to key issues and concerns, taking into account related risks, relative impact, and affected parties in coordination with the Board and key stakeholders;
 - (d) Advocate the Authority's work among the various concerned sectors and stakeholders;
 - (e) Call on any agency, group, individual member of the Board, local government unit, and host community to address issues and concerns relating to implementation of major programs, projects and activities;
 - (f) Supervise the monitoring and timely implementation of Eastern Visayas-wide programs, projects and activities;
 - (g) Endorse to the Board all policy recommendations, plans and programs for approval;
 - (h) Accept, on behalf of the Authority, donations, contributions, grants and bequests or gifts, in cash or in kind, from members, foreign governments,

- international agencies, private entities or any individual for purpose that will realize the functions of the Authority;
- (i) Supervise administrative operations including disbursement of any fund of the Authority, subject to the usual accounting and auditing procedures, and submit reports thereon;
- (j) Execute and administer the policies and measures approved by the Board;
- (k) Appoint, remove, dismiss or otherwise discipline for cause, all employees of the Authority in accordance with the standard guidelines for recruitment, employment, and discipline in the Civil Service Code;
- (l) Represent the Authority in all dealings with other offices, agencies, and instrumentalities of the government and with all persons and entities, public or private;
- (m) Sign agreements and/or contracts on behalf of the Authority, including those for expert and consultancy services and other reports of accountabilities emanating from the Authority;
- (n) Serve as *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors of the NEDA and the TIEZA; and
- (o) Perform such other functions that the Board may direct to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 12. Deputy Chairperson. – The EVDA Chairperson shall be assisted by one Deputy Chairperson, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the rank of Assistant Secretary upon the recommendation of the EVDA Chairperson. The Deputy Chairperson shall have the same qualifications as the Chairperson and shall perform such duties and functions as may be assigned by the Chairperson or as provided for by law.

SEC. 13. Executive Director. – An Executive Director shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon recommendation by the Chairperson: *Provided*, That no person shall be appointed as Executive Director unless one is a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of proven probity and integrity and a holder of a degree in economics, business, public administration, law, management or other related fields, and have at least five (5) years relevant experience in said fields: *Provided, further*, That the appointee to the position of Executive Director shall have been a resident of Eastern Visayas for five (5) years prior to appointment, and has the requisite eligibilities for third level career service position, pursuant to the career executive rank system: *Provided, finally*, that the appointee shall reside in Eastern Visayas during while serving in such office.

1 The Executive Director shall assist the Chairperson in carrying out the
2 functions of the Authority and shall, likewise, serve as the Secretary of the Board.

3 **SEC. 14. EVDA Advisory Council.** – There is hereby constituted an EVDA
4 Advisory Committee to be composed of the following:

- 5 (a) EVDA Chairperson as head;
- 6
- 7 (b) The Eastern Visayas RDC Chairperson;
- 8
- 9 (c) The District Representatives of the legislative districts comprising Eastern
10 Visayas;
- 11
- 12 (d) The Provincial Governors of the provinces comprising Eastern Visayas;
- 13
- 14 (e) The City Mayors of the independent cities in Eastern Visayas;
- 15
- 16 (f) The Regional Directors of the national line agencies with regional offices in
17 Eastern Visayas.

18 The EVDA Advisory Council shall convene at least once every six (6)
19 months, or as often as necessary, upon the call of the EDVA Chairperson, advise
20 or be consulted by the Authority on important matters related to Eastern Visayas.

21 **SEC. 15. Organizational Structure.** – The Board of Directors, upon the
22 recommendation of the Chairperson shall determine the organizational structure,
23 staffing pattern and compensation of the Authority subject to Civil Service laws,
24 rules and regulations and Republic Act No. 11466, otherwise known as “Salary
25 Standardization Law of 2019”, and the Position Classification and Compensation
26 System. The Chairperson may reorganize the Authority and may create or abolish
27 divisions, units or branches therein as the exigencies of the affairs of the Authority
28 may require.

29 **SEC. 16. Merit System.** – All officials and employees of the EVDA shall be
30 selected and appointed on the basis of merit and fitness in accordance with civil
31 service law, rules and regulations. The recruitment, transfer, promotion, and
32 dismissal of all its personnel including temporary workers shall be governed by a
33 merit system that will be established by the EVDA in compliance with existing laws,
34 rules and regulations.

35 **SEC. 17. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation
36 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act: *Provided*,
37 That the operating expenses of the Authority should not exceed fourteen percent
38 (14%) of the annual appropriation: *Provided further*, That at least eight-six percent
39 (86%) of said annual appropriation shall be disbursed for the programs, projects,
40 and activities of the Authority.

1 **SEC. 18. Transfer of Post-Haiyan Rehabilitation Funds.**- The authority,
2 control and administration of funds, equipment and properties donated by foreign
3 governments, foreign and local non-profit agencies and foundations and private
4 entities to the National Government for the purpose of the rehabilitation of areas in
5 Eastern Visayas that were affected by Typhoon Haiyan, as well as all other funds
6 received or appropriated by the National Government for the same purpose are
7 hereby transferred to the Authority. Hereafter, the Authority shall exercise the sole
8 power of disposition and control of the rehabilitation funds, in accordance with the
9 provisions of this Act or until the purposes for which the said funds had been
10 donated are accomplished.

11 **SEC. 19. Formulation of the Eastern Visayas Development Master**
12 **Plan.**- Upon its organization, the Authority shall formulate and submit its
13 development master plan to NEDA for integration into the Medium-Term Philippine
14 Development Plan and public investment program. The Eastern Visayas
15 Development Master Plan shall serve as the framework for the accelerated and
16 balanced development of Eastern Visayas in accordance with the aims and
17 purposes of this Act.

18 **SEC. 20. Administrative Supervision.**- The Authority shall be under the
19 direct supervision of the President of the Philippines.

20 **SEC. 21. Interpretation.**- The powers, authorities and functions that are
21 vested in the Authority are intended to decentralize governmental functions and
22 authority and promote an efficient and effective working relationship between the
23 EVDA, the national government, and the local government units.

24 **SEC. 22. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The EVDA shall adopt
25 rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within sixty (60) days
26 from the date of its approval.

27 **SEC. 23. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
28 unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected
29 shall continue to remain in full force and effect.

30 **SEC. 24. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules
31 and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of
32 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

33 **SEC. 25. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
34 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

35 Approved,

Mty. 5.28.20