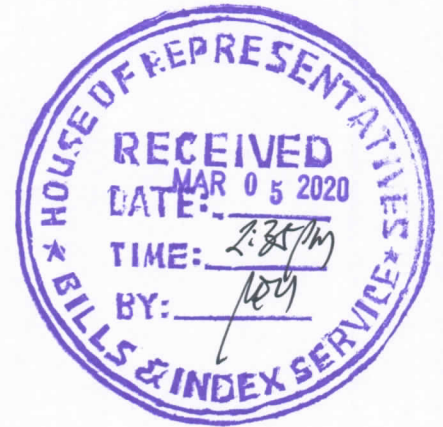


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6501**



INTRODUCED BY:

HON. ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING, HON. CHERYL P. DELOSO-MONTALLA, HON. JOSE ANTONIO "KUYA" R. SY-ALVARADO, HON. ROMMEL RICO T. ANGARA, HON. JUAN MIGUEL MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, HON. JUAN PABLO "RIMPY" P. BONDOC, HON. CARLOS O. COJUANCO, HON. JOSE ENRIQUE "JOET" S. GARCIA III, HON. AURELIO "DONG" D. GONZALES, JR., HON. JEFFREY D. KHONGHUN, HON. CARMELO "JON" B. LAZATIN II, HON. MARICEL G. NATIVIDAD-NAGAÑO, M.D., HON. GAVINI "APOL" C. PANCHITO, HON. FLORIDA ROBES, HON. GERALDINE B. ROMAN, HON. LORNA C. SILVERIO, HON. ROSANNA "RIA" VERGARA, HON. NOEL L. VILLANUEVA, HON. HENRY R. VILLARICA, HON. MICAELA S. VIOLAGO, and HON. VICTOR A. YAP

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (RDC)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Government efforts to undertake regional development in the Philippines date back to 1950 when President Quirino signed Executive Order (E.O.) No. 367 establishing the National Planning Commission vested with regional planning functions. However, no general plans for the regional areas were actually accomplished by this Commission.

In 1954, the Government Survey and Reorganization Commission (GSRC), created in accordance with Republic Act (R.A.) No. 997 was ordered to conduct a thorough study of the Executive Branch of the Government and to formulate recommendations to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of government. Among the plans submitted by the GSRC was Reorganization Plan No. 53-A concerning field operations which introduced the concept of dividing the country into several regions in order to provide greater uniformity and standardization in the decentralization of government functions. However, the regional delineation advocated by the GSRC was not strictly followed by the different agencies implementing the plan.

The creation of development authorities and regional planning boards in the sixties' represented more definite attempts at regional planning and development. With the declaration of martial law in 1972, the Integrated Reorganization Plan (IRP) came into effect. A significant provision of the IRP concerned the division of the country into eleven (later increased to 13) regions to be uniformly followed as much as possible by all agencies of the national government when implementing their regionalization scheme. The IRP declared it a policy to promote the socio-economic development of the regions by regional development and planning within the context of national and local planning. Hence, the regions as geographic areas have become one of the major focal points of development.

Article X Section 14, of the 1987 Constitution states that: "The President shall provide for Regional Development Councils or other similar bodies composed of local government officials, regional heads of departments and other government offices, and representatives from non-

governmental organizations within the regions for purposes of administrative decentralization to strengthen the autonomy of the units therein and to accelerate the economic and social growth and development of the units in the region”;

Pursuant to this constitutional provision, Executive Order (EO) No. 308 series of 1987 was issued which provides for the reorganization of the Regional Development Councils. Eventually, EO No. 318 series of 1988 amended EO 308 which increased the membership of the Regional Consultative Assemblies to “make these more effective as deliberative and consultative bodies to advise, assist, support and cooperate with the Regional Development Councils in discharging their functions.” The participation of the members of Congress as part of the advisory council of the RDC came into effect only by virtue of EO 318.

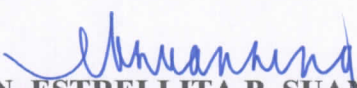
Then, EO No. 366 series of 1989 further amended EO 308 and underscored the significance of the “need to provide for a responsive forum at the regional level for the meaningful participation of the concerned members of Congress and local officials in the selection, prioritization, and allocation of funds for projects under the infrastructure program which require national government appropriations.”

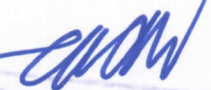
After the enactment of the Local Government Code of 1991, EO 505 series of 1991 was issued reorganizing the Regional Development Councils to make them more responsive to the increased autonomy provided by the Code to local government units. It was in this EO where members of Congress became part of the composition of the RDC and not just the RDA.

However, in 1996, EO 325 was issued which reorganized the RDCs removed the participation of the members of Congress in the RDCs. The need to provide for a responsive forum at the regional level for the meaningful participation of the concerned members of Congress and local officials in the selection, prioritization, and allocation of funds for projects, projects and activities which require national government appropriations cannot be overemphasized.

While the purpose of decentralization is to empower local government units and provide the milieu for the development of the rural communities, the role of the members of Congress in this endeavour is no mean feat. It is for this reason that the members of Congress must be given the opportunity not only to be heard and participate in the crafting of laws but also in defining initiatives that will affect the people that they represent through participatory planning, selection and prioritization in the RDCs.

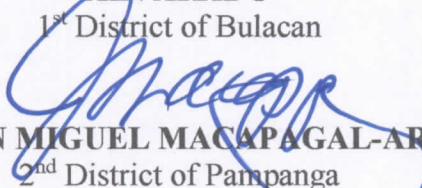
Immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


HON. ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING
1st District of Nueva Ecija

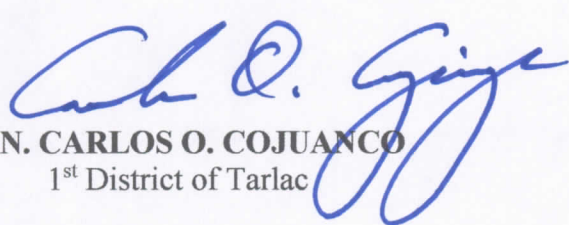

HON. CHERYL P. DELOSO-MONTALLA
2nd District of Zambales

**HON. JOSE ANTONIO “KUYA” R. SY-
ADVARADO**
1st District of Bulacan

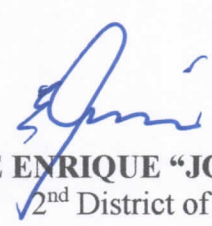

HON. ROMMEL RICO T. ANGARA
Lone District of Aurora


HON. JUAN MIGUEL MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
2nd District of Pampanga


HON. JUAN PABLO “RIMPY” P. BONDOC
4th District of Pampanga



HON. CARLOS O. COJUANCO
1st District of Tarlac



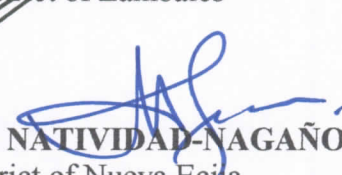
HON. JOSE ENRIQUE "JOET" S. GARCIA III
2nd District of Bataan

HON. AURELIO "DONG" D. GONZALES, JR.
3rd District of Pampanga

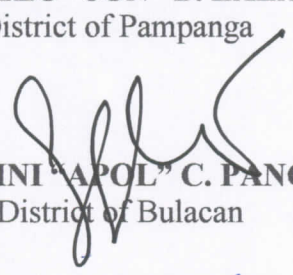


HON. JEFFREY B. KHONGHUN
1st District of Zambales

HON. CARMELO "JON" B. LAZATIN II
1st District of Pampanga



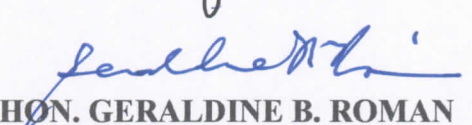
HON. MARICEL G. NATIVIDAD-NAGAÑO, M.D.
4th District of Nueva Ecija




HON. GAVINI "APOL" C. PANCHÓ
2nd District of Bulacan



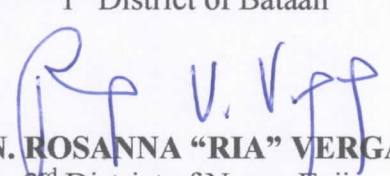
HON. FLORIDA ROBES
Lone District, San Jose del Monte City



HON. GERALDINE B. ROMAN
1st District of Bataan

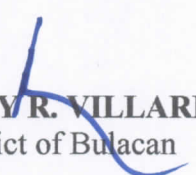


HON. LORNA C. SILVERIO
3rd District of Bulacan

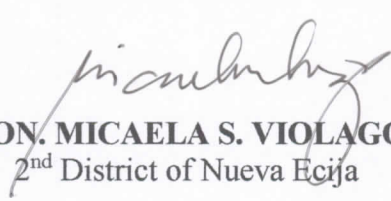


HON. ROSANNA "RIA" VERGARA
3rd District of Nueva Ecija

HON. NOEL L. VILLANUEVA
3rd District of Tarlac



HON. HENRY R. VILLARICA
4th District of Bulacan



HON. MICAELA S. VIOLAGO
2nd District of Nueva Ecija

HON. VICTOR A. YAP
2nd District of Tarlac

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EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 6501

INTRODUCED BY:

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (RDC)

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Regional Development Council (RDC) Act."

SEC. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State that socio-economic development programs and activities of the Government shall be undertaken with the extensive and active participation and support from, and coordination of, various government agencies, as well as private sector institutions at the national, districts, regional and local levels;

SEC. 3. *Institutionalization of RDC.* – The Regional Development Council is hereby institutionalized and organized structurally and functionally in every region of the Philippines, in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Regional Development Council.* – The Regional Development Council (RDC) shall be an attached government agency of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA). The RDC shall be jointly headed by a Chairman and Co-Chairman appointed by the President. The NEDA Regional Director shall be the ex-officio Vice-Chairperson of the RDC. The NED Assistant Regional Director shall be the Secretary of the RDC.

SEC. 5. *Regular Members of RDC.* – The following shall be the regular members of the RDC of each region:

- a. all provincial governors;
- b. all legislative district representatives of the House of Representatives;
- c. all city mayors;
- d. mayors of municipalities designated as provincial capitals;

- e. all presidents of the provincial league of mayors;
- f. the mayors of the municipality designated as the regional center;
- g. the regional directors of agencies represented in the National Economic and Development Authority Board (NEDA, DAR, DA, DBM, DENR, DOF, DFA, DOH, DILG, DOLE, DPWH, DOST, DTI, DOTr, DICT, BSP) and the regional directors of DepEd, DSWD, and DOT; provided that each agency shall be represented by only one regional director; *and*
- h. private sector representative (PSR).

SEC. 6. *Selection of PSR.* - The selection of private sector representative to the RDC shall be done in accordance with the guidelines approved by the NEDA Board.

SEC. 7. *Special Members.* - The RDC, subject to the concurrence of majority of its regular members, may designate special non-voting members of the Council.

SEC. 8. *Functions of the RDC.* - The RDC shall have the following functions:

- a. Coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of short and long-term regional development plans and investment programs, regional physical framework plan and special development plans, including the formulation of policy recommendations;
- b. Integrate approved development plans of provinces and cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the region into the regional development plan;
- c. Review, prioritize, and endorse to the national government the annual and multi-year sectoral investment programs of the region for funding and implementation;
- d. Review and endorse to the national government the annual budgets of agency regional offices, state colleges and universities and special development authorities;
- e. Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the region to support regional development objectives, policies and strategies;
- f. Review and endorse national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the regions;
- g. As required by the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), review and endorse projects of national government agencies that have impact on the region and projects of LGUs in the region requiring national government financial exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government budget appropriations or subsidies, among others;
- h. Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several agencies or LGUs;
- i. Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities, government-owned and/or -controlled corporations and special development authorities in the region; and
- j. Perform other related functions and activities as may be necessary to promote and sustain the socio-economic development of the regions.

SEC. 9. *Executive Committee.* The Council shall create an Executive Committee to act on matters that require immediate attention for and on behalf of the RDC when it is not in session.

The Executive Committee shall comprise one-fourth of the total membership of the fully-constituted Council, the membership to be determined by the Council, provided that all sectoral committee chairmen created under Section 7 of this Executive Order, shall automatically become members of the Executive Committee. The Chairman, Co-Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the RDC shall also serve as the officers of the Executive Committee.

SEC. 10. Sectoral Committees. - To assist the RDC in the performance of its functions, the Council shall create sectoral committees to handle social, economic, infrastructure, and development administration concerns whose composition shall be determined by the Council. The sectoral committees shall perform functions analogous to and supportive of the functions of the Regional Development Council. They shall review and endorse matters pertaining to their respective sectors to the RDC Executive Committee and/or the RDC Full Council.

SEC. 11. Advisory Committee. - To further strengthen the coordinative and consultative mechanism in the regions, there is hereby created an Advisory Committee to advise, assist and support the Council in discharging its functions. It shall be composed of the members of the House of Representatives representing the provinces and districts of the region who shall signify their intention to become members thereof in writing, and members of the Council's Executive Committee.

The Chairman, Co-Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary of the Council shall also serve as the officers of the Advisory Committee.

The Committee may meet as often as necessary but not less than once a semester.

SEC. 12. Affiliate Committees. - The various committees and councils organized to carry out national and agency programs are considered to be under the umbrella of the RDC. Their role shall be to assist the RDC coordinate, monitor and evaluate their respective specific concerns. In general, secretariat functions to these bodies shall be provided by the lead agency that organized the council/committee.

SEC. 13. Meetings. - The RDC Full Council shall meet at least once every quarter. It may adopt its own rules on constituting quorum.

SEC. 14. Appointment of Chairman/Co-Chairman. - In line with the government's thrust on decentralization, the RDC shall nominate at least two (2) local chief executives who are ex-officio members and two (2) district representatives from whom the President shall select and appoint the RDC Chairman and Co-Chairman. Regional Directors of national government agencies in the region shall not be included in the selection of nominees for Chairman and Co-Chairman.

SEC. 15. Functions/Powers and Responsibilities of the Chairman/Co-Chairman. - The Chairman/Co-Chairman shall have the following functions, powers and responsibilities:

- a. Preside over the meetings of the Council;
- b. Direct members of the Council, affiliate committees and regional line agencies to perform tasks the RDC may deem necessary;
- c. Accept, in behalf of the Council, donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts;
- d. Represent the region in Cabinet meetings and other activities at the national level;
- e. Submit to the President through the NEDA Board regional plans, regional investment programs, annual development reports and other documents on the region as approved by the Council; *and*

- f. Perform other functions and duties as may be directed by the President.

SEC. 16. *RDC Secretariat.* - The NEDA Regional Office shall be the Secretariat of the RDC. The NEDA Regional Director shall manage the technical, administrative and financial operations of the RDC and shall be accountable for the funds and properties of the RDC.

SEC. 17. *Term of Office.* - The RDC Chairman, Co-Chairman and private sector representatives shall serve in the Council for a fixed term of three years coinciding with the regular term of local elective officials.

SEC. 18. *Appropriations.* - The initial funding of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the NEDA. Thereafter, such amount, as may be necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 19. *Implementing Rules.* - To carry out the provisions of this Act, the implementing rules and regulations shall be promulgated by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) not later than ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act.

SEC. 20. *Separability Clause.* - Should any provision of this Act or any part thereof be declared invalid, the other provisions, insofar as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 21. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, and issuance or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 22. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least one (1) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,