

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2280



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Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE MARIA LOURDES ACOSTA-ALBA

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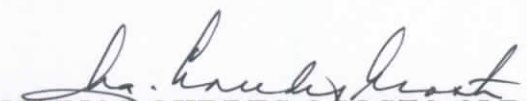
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is an agricultural country with a total land area of 30 million hectares. Of this figure, 13 million hectares representing 43% of the country's total land area is devoted to agricultural crops, livestock, and inland fishery production. About 50% of the Philippine population is dependent on fishery, farming, and agriculture-related industries as a source of livelihood. Indeed, agriculture remains the linchpin for economic growth.

Agriculturists, agricultural engineers, fishery technologists, veterinarians, and agricultural technicians comprising the class of "agricultural workers" that are produced by agricultural based educational institutions and whose technical and professional expertise are certified by the Professional Regulation Commission and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority plays a vital role in the development and modernization of the Philippine agriculture. They provide the necessary assistance and professional services to the farmers and fisher folks in managing the farms for increased farm profitability and productivity.

This Bill acknowledges the role and contributions of government agricultural workers by affirming their rights and providing a mechanism for career development. Needless to say, personal fulfilment allows for a better sense of responsibility.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this Bill earnestly sought.

  
**MARIA LOURDES ACOSTA-ALBA**  
First District, Bukidnon

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Introduced by **REP. MARIA LOURDES ACOSTA-ALBA**

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA OF AGRICULTURAL**  
**DEVELOPMENT WORKERS**

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

**ARTICLE I**  
**TITLE OF THE ACT, DEFINITION OF TERMS, AND COVERAGE**

**SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Magna Carta of  
Agricultural Development Workers."

**SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy** — The State shall promote and  
improve the social and economic well-being of Agricultural Development  
Workers, their living and working conditions and terms of employment. It  
shall likewise develop their skills, knowledge, orientation and capabilities so  
that they will become more responsive and effective in providing the  
necessary services for countryside development, the modernization of the  
Philippine Agriculture and help achieve Food Security and Self-Sufficiency.

**SEC. 3. Definition Of Terms.**

- a) Agricultural Development Workers shall mean all persons who-  
are engaged in agricultural development activities and all  
persons employed in the Department of Agriculture including its  
bureaus and attached agencies, Local Government Units (LGUs),  
State Colleges and Universities and concerned government and  
private institutions, and shall include agriculturists, agricultural  
engineers, fishery technologists, veterinarians, agricultural  
technicians, agricultural employees, administrative and support  
personnel employed regardless of their employment status;



- 1 b) Agriculturist shall refer to a person who is a graduate of a four  
2 year course in agriculture or any related course registered and  
3 license with the Professional Regulation Commission who  
4 performs any of the specialized activities such as agronomy,  
5 horticulture, animal husbandry, entomology, plant pathology,  
6 plant breeding, agricultural economics, agricultural extension  
7 and marketing;
- 8 c) Agricultural Engineer shall to a person registered with the  
9 Professional Regulation Commission performing engineering  
10 activities in agriculture and fisheries, particularly on areas of  
11 farm power and machinery, irrigation and drainage, soil and  
12 water conservation, agricultural buildings and structures,  
13 agricultural processing and postharvest Facilities;
- 14 d) Fishery Technologists shall refer to a person who is a graduate  
15 of a four-year course in fisheries and registered and licensed with  
16 the Professional Regulation Commission performing activities on  
17 fisheries and aquaculture, and fishery production and  
18 processing;
- 19 e) Veterinarian shall refer to a person registered with the  
20 Professional Regulation Commission performing professional  
21 activities on veterinary services such as disease prevention,  
22 control and animal health;
- 23 f) Agricultural Technician shall refer to a trained or skilled  
24 agricultural worker who is not necessary a college graduate and  
25 certified by the Technical Education and Skills Development  
26 Authority performing job such as plant nursery propagator, farm  
27 mechanic and agricultural machinery operator and other related  
28 skilled job in agricultural production, processing and marketing;
- 29 g) Agricultural Extension Worker shall refer to an agriculturist,  
30 agricultural engineer, fishery technologist and veterinarian who  
31 helps farmers and fishermen in the promotion of agricultural and  
32 fisheries development plans, programs and projects through the  
33 use of extension the theologies, concepts and principles;
- 34 h) Agricultural Employee is a person who is a graduate of  
35 Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering, Fisheries, Veterinary  
36 Medicine or any other agriculture-related course from any  
37 recognized college or university and is holder of an appropriate  
38 civil service but not a licensed professional under the  
39 Professional Regulation Commission who is employed in the  
40 government, non-government organization or private institution  
41 who performs activities on agriculture development-
- 42 i) CSC shall refer the Civil Service Commission;
- 43 j) DOLE shall refer to the Department of Labor and Employment;
- 44 k) DA shall refer to the Department of Agriculture;

- 1 l) LGU shall refer to the Local Government Unit;  
2 m) PRC shall refer to the Professional Regulation Commission;  
3 n) PRBs shall refer to the Professional Regulatory Boards of  
4 Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering, Fisheries and Veterinary  
5 Medicine under the  
6 Professional Regulation Commission; and  
7 o) SUCs shall refer to State Universities and Colleges.  
8

9 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** - This act shall cover all Agricultural Development  
10 Workers of the government, non-government organizations, and private  
11 institutions and shall include agriculturists, agricultural engineers, fishery  
12 technologists, veterinarians, agricultural technicians, agricultural  
13 employees, farm workers, administrative and support personnel employed  
14 regardless of their employment status.  
15

## 16 **ARTICLE II**

### 17 **EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

18

19 **SEC. 5. Employment Assistance.** - The State hereby ensure and  
20 guarantee the provision of employment opportunities of agricultural  
21 development workers which are being produced in educational institutions  
22 and are registered and licensed by PRC and certified by TESDA. In line with  
23 this, the DOLE in collaboration with educational institutions, PRC, TESDA,  
24 DA and DTI shall undertake employment promotion of agricultural  
25 development workers in the domestic and foreign market and adopt and  
26 implement a National Employment Program for Agricultural Development  
27 Workers.  
28

29 **SEC. 6. Personnel Required.** - All offices, firms and establishments  
30 either government or private, and farmers organizations and cooperatives  
31 engaged in the production, processing, handling and marketing of  
32 agriculture and fisheries products and likewise implementing projects  
33 related to irrigation, farm mechanization, postharvest facilities and  
34 agricultural infrastructures shall employ the required number and/or  
35 engage the services of agriculturists, agricultural engineers, fishery  
36 technologists and veterinarians to perform professional services based on  
37 the standards and guidelines to be promulgated by the PRBs concerned;  
38

39 Provided, That there shall be no understaffing and/or overloading of  
40 agricultural development workers. The ratio of staff to clientele shall be such  
41 as to reasonably effect a sustained quality of agricultural service at all times  
42 without overworking the agricultural development workers and over-  
43 extending their services. Only qualified professional shall occupy the  
agriculturist, agricultural engineer, fishery technologist and veterinarian in



1 all government instrumentalities, non-government organization and private  
2 firms and establishments;

3        Provided Further, That the government shall allocate the necessary  
4 funds for the hiring of additional agricultural development worker in cases  
5 of over-loading of personnel in specific areas of assignment of concerned  
6 government offices.

7  
8        **SEC. 7. Recruitment and Qualifications.** - The selection and  
9 appointment of agricultural development workers shall be in accordance  
10 with the merit and fitness principle; Provided That he/she has the  
11 appropriate civil service eligibilities, professional license and required  
12 education, training and experiences.

13        All agricultural and fishery agencies and institutions in government  
14 shall be headed either by a registered Agriculturist, Agricultural Engineer,  
15 Fishery Technologist or Veterinarian depending on the scope and magnitude  
16 of the functions of the particular agency or institution covering the scope of  
17 practice of concerned profession except for Cabinet and non-career  
18 positions.

19  
20        **SEC. 8. Professionalization of Agricultural Development Workers**  
21 **in Government.** - The State shall promote and ensure that agricultural  
22 development workers in the government are accorded with appropriate  
23 position titles, just compensation and benefits and proper professional  
24 recognition.

25        The Agricultural Technologist positions occupied by the Agricultural  
26 Development Workers at the Local Government Units are hereby upgraded  
27 or reclassified into appropriate level of Agriculturist, Agricultural Engineer,  
28 Fishery Technologist, and Veterinarian positions. The following positions  
29 are hereby made mandatory at the Local Government Units in addition to  
30 the prescribed position under- the Local Government Code of 1991: a)  
31 Municipal Agriculturist except for highly urbanized cities; b) Provincial, City  
32 and Municipal Agricultural Engineer; c) Provincial Fishery Technologist;  
33 and d) Municipal Veterinarian.

34  
35        **SEC. 9. Performance Evaluation and Merit Promotion.** — The  
36 Secretary of Agriculture in consultation with the PRBs, CSC, DOLE and the  
37 recognized national associations of agriculturist, agricultural engineers,  
38 fishery technologists, veterinarians and other agricultural development  
39 workers shall prepare a uniform career and personnel development plan. Such  
40 career and personnel development plan shall include provisions on merit  
41 promotion, performance evaluation, in-service training grants, job rotation and  
42 incentives awards system.

1       **SEC. 10. Transfer of Geographical Reassignment of Agricultural**  
2 **Officers and Employees.** — No transfer or geographical reassignment shall  
3 be made or effected without a written notice to the agricultural development  
4 worker concerned stating therein the reason for such: Provided, That said  
5 written notice shall be made thirty (30) days prior to the date of transfer or  
6 reassignment: Provided further, That if the employee concerned disagrees with  
7 the order of transfer or reassignment, he/she may appeal said order with the  
8 Civil Service Commission or the Department of Labor and Employment, as the  
9 case may be: Provided, further, That pending appeal, such transfer or  
10 reassignment shall be held in abeyance: Provided, furthermore, That no  
11 transfer or reassignment whatsoever shall be made three (3) months prior to  
12 any local or national elections: Provided, finally, That the necessary expenses  
13 of the transfer and/or reassignment of the agricultural worker or employee and  
14 his/her immediate family shall be paid by the Government,

15  
16       **SEC. 11. Security of Tenure.** - An agricultural development workers  
17 holding a permanent position in the government shall not be terminated  
18 except for cause: Provided That in the event the agricultural development  
19 worker is found to be unjustly dismissed by the Civil Service Commission,  
20 he/she shall be entitled to reinstatement without loss of seniority rights and  
21 back wages with twenty per centum (20%) interest to be computed from the  
22 time compensation is withheld up to the reinstatement. 'However, if the  
23 agricultural development worker does not desire to be reinstated, he/she shall  
24 be entitled to back wages and separation pay with twenty per centum interest.

25  
26       **SEC. 12. Code of Conduct** -All agriculturists, agricultural engineers,  
27 fishery technologists and veterinarians must be guided by the Code of Ethics  
28 promulgated by the Professional Regulatory Boards and the Professional  
29 Regulation Commission. The Secretary of Agriculture in consultation with the  
30 Civil Service Commission, Department of Labor and Employment and the  
31 concerned stakeholders shall adopt a Code of Ethics of other Agricultural  
32 Development Workers not covered by the PRC.

33  
34       **SEC. 13. Normal Hours of Work.** - The normal hours of work of an  
35 agricultural development worker shall not exceed eight (8) hours a day or forty  
36 (40) hours a week. Hours of work shall include: a) the time the agricultural  
37 workers is required to be on active duty or to be at a prescribed workplace; b)  
38 the time which an agricultural worker is permitted to work; c) the time which  
39 an agricultural worker is required to work in a place other than the prescribed  
40 workplace.

41  
42       **SEC. 15. Overtime Work.** - Where the exigencies of the service so  
43 require, any agricultural development worker, whether in Government or non-  
44 government service, may be required to render service beyond the normal eight



1 (8) hours a day, inclusive of Saturday and Sunday and non-working holidays.  
2 In such cases, the agricultural development worker shall be given additional  
3 compensation in accordance with existing laws on the matter.  
4

5 **SEC. 17. Married Agricultural Development Worker.** -Whenever  
6 possible, the proper authorities shall take steps to enable married couples  
7 both of whom are public agricultural development workers, to be employed or  
8 assigned in the same municipality.  
9

### 10 **ARTICLE III** 11 **RIGHTS, BENEFITS AND REWARDS SYSTEM** 12

13 **SEC. 18. Freedom from interference or coercion.** - It shall be  
14 unlawful for any person to commit any of the following acts of interference or  
15 coercion:

- 16 a) Require as a condition of employment that the agricultural  
17 development worker shall not join an organization or union;
- 18 b) Discriminate in order to encourage or discourage membership in any  
19 agricultural development workers organization or union;
- 20 c) Prevent an agricultural development worker from carrying out his  
21 /her duties and functions in his/her organization or union or to  
22 penalize him/her for any lawful action performed in that capacity;
- 23 d) Harass or intimidate an agricultural development worker or prevent  
24 him/her from performing duties and functions; and
- 25 e) Perform acts that will diminish the independence and freedom of the  
26 union or organization to direct its own affairs.  
27

28 **SEC. 19. Discrimination Prohibited.** - An agricultural development  
29 worker shall not be discriminated by reason of creed, sex, political belief, civil  
30 status, and ethnic grouping in the exercise of his/her profession.  
31

32 **SEC.20. Safeguards in Administrative Proceedings.** - In every  
33 administrative proceeding, an Agricultural Worker shall have the following  
34 rights:

- 35 a) Be informed of the charges;
- 36 b) Full access to evidence against him/her;
- 37 c) Defend himself/herself through counsel of his/her choice;
- 38 d) Be given adequate time to prepare his/her case, which shall in no  
39 case exceed twenty (20) days;
- 40 e) Appeal any adverse ruling to designated authorities;
- 41 f) Cross-examine witnesses and to processes for the production of  
42 witnesses;
- 43 g) Reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in his/her defense  
44 in case of exoneration or dismissal of the charges ;and

- 1 h) Such other rights provided by other national agencies and local  
2 government units to their respective officers and employees to ensure  
3 fairness and impartially in prosecution.  
4

5 **SEC. 21. Right to Join Organizations.** - Agricultural development  
6 workers shall have the right to freely join organizations or unions for purposes  
7 not contrary to law, in order to protect their mutual interest and to seek  
8 redress of grievances through peaceful concerted activities various national  
9 organizations of agricultural development workers shall be consulted in the  
10 formulation of national educational policies and professional standards, and  
11 in the formulation of national policies and programs on agriculture of the  
12 government; Provided, That the government shall ensure that the agricultural  
13 development workers organizations are represented in the national and local  
14 Agricultural and Fishery Councils, local development councils, and other  
15 policy making and consultative bodies of the government.  
16

17 **SEC. 22. Criteria for Incentives and Rewards System.** - The reward  
18 and incentive system for agricultural development workers provided under this  
19 Act, which will encourage them to stay in the service, promote their  
20 productivity, and reward them for extraordinary performance, shall be  
21 governed by the following criteria:

- 22 a) Honorarium - form of remuneration for services rendered beyond the  
23 established workload of agricultural development workers whose broad  
24 and superior knowledge and expertise contribute to agricultural  
25 productivity and innovativeness;  
26 b) Incentive pay - form of remuneration given 10 individuals whose  
27 services in management, administration, policy making and support  
28 contribute to the efficient and effective implementation of the  
29 agricultural and fisheries programs of the government;  
30 c) Performance Bonus - form of remuneration given to agricultural  
31 development workers for performance that exceeds established targets;  
32 and  
33 d) Other incentives that the Department Of Agricultural and -Local  
34 Government may establish  
35

36 **SEC. 24. Other Compensation and Benefits.** - All agricultural  
37 development workers shall be entitled to the following additional  
38 compensation and benefits:

- 39 a) Representation Allowance and Traveling Allowance All  
40 Provincial/City/Municipal Agriculturist, Veterinarians, Agricultural  
41 Engineers, and Fisheries Officers shall be entitled to Representation  
42 Allowance and Travelling Allowance (RATA) equivalent to the  
43 Department Head of the LGUs;



- 1 b) Hazard Allowance - All agricultural development workers assigned in  
2 difficult areas, strife-torn or embattled areas, distressed or isolated  
3 stations, animal/plant/fisheries breeding station, plant nurseries,  
4 plantations and demonstration farms, laboratories especially those  
5 handling x-rays, radioisotopes, chemicals, etc., sea-borne patrols,  
6 construction and installation of agricultural infrastructure projects,  
7 and other areas declared under a state of calamity or emergency  
8 which exposes them to great danger, occupational risks or perils of  
9 life shall be compensated with hazard allowance equivalent to at  
10 least twenty per centum (20%) of the monthly basic salary;
- 11 c) Subsistence Allowance - All agricultural development workers who  
12 are required to render services in the communities, institutions,  
13 animal and plant breeding nurseries, plantations and demonstration  
14 farms and other barrier programs and projects of the Department of  
15 Agriculture in order to make their services available at all times, shall  
16 be entitled to full daily subsistence allowance of three (3) meals,  
17 which shall be computed in accordance with the prevailing  
18 circumstances;
- 19 d) Longevity Pay - A longevity pay equivalent to five per centum (5%) of  
20 the monthly basic pay shall be paid to an agricultural worker for  
21 every (3) years of continuous, efficient and meritorious services  
22 rendered;
- 23 e) Clothing Allowance - All agricultural development workers shall be  
24 entitled to a clothing allowance in accordance with approved laws  
25 and regulations or as mandated by law;
- 26 f) Housing -All agricultural workers who are in tour of duty and those  
27 who, because of unavoidable circumstances, are forced to stay in the  
28 institution or community with living quarters shall be entitled to  
29 such quarters for free: Provided, That if such living quarters are not  
30 available, the workers shall receive housing allowances: Provided,  
31 further. That said allowance shall be reviewed periodically and  
32 adjusted for inflation;
- 33 g) Compensation for injuries - Agricultural development workers shall  
34 be protected against work-related injuries in accordance with the  
35 Labor Code or the Civil Code as the case may be;
- 36 h) On-Call Pay - In cases of "On-Call" status, the agricultural  
37 development worker shall be entitled to an "On-Call" pay equivalent  
38 to fifty per centum (50%) of his/her regular wage. "On-Cali" status  
39 refers to a condition when an agricultural officer or employee is called  
40 upon to respond to an urgent or immediate need or relief work during  
41 emergencies such that the agricultural worker cannot utilize I  
42 his/her time for personal needs: Provided. That no agricultural  
43 worker shall be placed in an "On-Call" status beyond seven (7) days;  
44 and

- 1 i) Motor and Vehicle Loan - All agricultural development workers shall  
2 be entitled to avail of the motor and vehicle loan of the Department  
3 of Agriculture. The government shall provide adequate budgetary  
4 support for this purpose.  
5

6 **ARTICLE IV**  
7 **HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**  
8

9 **SEC. 25. Training Program.** - The DA together with the DOLE, PRC,  
10 CHED and DILG shall formulate and implement a comprehensive training  
11 programs for the agricultural development workers as part of the Continuing  
12 Professional Development Program and Human Resource Development  
13 Program of the LGUs; Provided, That adequate budgetary support shall be  
14 provided by the government;  
15

16 **SEC. 26. Scholarship Program.** — The Agricultural Development  
17 Workers and students on agriculture, agricultural engineering, fishery, and  
18 veterinary medicine shall have fill access and priority allocation on the  
19 scholarship program of the government.  
20

21 **SEC. 27. Capability Assessment.** - The Government and non-  
22 government agencies shall conduct human resource development and  
23 management studies in the following areas:

- 24 a) Types and amount of facilities and resources to render quality  
25 agricultural service to the clientele;  
26 b) Venue and opportunities for the agricultural development workers to  
27 grow and develop their potentials and develop a sense of self-worth  
28 and dignity in their work;  
29 c) Mechanisms for democratic consultation;  
30 d) Ways and means of giving rank-and-file agricultural development  
31 workers viable opportunities for education, personal growth and  
32 development; and  
33 e) Staffing patterns and standards of welfare for agricultural  
34 development workers welfare to ensure that they receive quality care.  
35  
36

37 **ARTICLE V**  
38 **ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT**  
39

40 **SEC. 28. Rules and Regulations.** - The Secretary of the Department of  
41 Agriculture together with the DOLE, CSC, DILG and PRBs and in consultation  
42 with the national organizations of agricultural development workers shall  
43 formulate and prepare necessary rules and regulations in implementing the  
44 provisions of this Magna Carta.



1  
2       **SEC. 29. Monitoring of Implementation.** - The Secretary of  
3 Agriculture shall create a Monitoring Committee which shall monitor the  
4 implementation of the provisions of this Act. The committee shall be composed  
5 of representatives of the DA, DILG, CSC, PRBs and the recognized national  
6 associations of agricultural development workers: Provided, further, That the  
7 Secretary of Agriculture shall submit semi-annual reports on the status of the  
8 implementation of this Act to the Committee on Agriculture and Food of the  
9 House of Representatives and the Senate.

10  
11       **SEC. 30. Penal Provisions.** - Any person who shall willfully interfere  
12 with, restrain or coerce any agricultural development worker in the exercise  
13 of his/her rights or shall violate any of the provisions of this Act shall upon  
14 conviction, be punished by a fine of not less than Twenty Thousand Pesos  
15 (P20,000.00) but not more than Forty Thousand Pesos (P40,000.00) or  
16 imprisonment of not more than one ( 1) year, or both, at the discretion of the  
17 court. If the offender is a public official, the court, in addition to the penalties  
18 provided in the preceding paragraph, shall impose the additional penalty of  
19 disqualification from office of such offending public official.

20  
21       **SEC. 31. Funding.** - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions  
22 of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year  
23 following its enactment into law and every year thereafter.

24  
25       **SEC. 32. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is declared  
26 unconstitutional or invalid the other provisions thereof affected thereby shall  
27 continue to be in full force and effect.

28  
29       **SEC. 33. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive  
30 orders, rules and issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions  
31 of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

32  
33       **SEC. 34. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
34 its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation  
35

36       Approved,