

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

**FIFTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 334

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**Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE**  
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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill reenacts House Bill No. 6205 which has been approved by the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress on 26 May 2009 and was transmitted to on 29 May 2009 and received on even date by the Senate.

Since the enactment of the Local Government Code in 1991, the Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) has been organized in many local government units notwithstanding the fact that the present law makes it only optional.

Pilot organizations have been established in various local government units but they need to be strengthened.

The function of an environment and natural resources officer should be made mandatory in the light of the fact that many environmental and natural resource problems have emerged in recent years that require constant attention at the local government level.

However, because of financial constraints it is envisioned in this bill that the mandatory requirement of appointing an environment and natural resources officer be limited only to provinces, cities, and municipalities in the Metropolitan Manila area.

However, due to budgetary constraints in municipalities that are components of provinces, the organization, staffing, and appointment of an environment and natural resources officer and office will remain optional.

Given that in addition to the primary responsibilities as stated in Section 484 paragraph (b) (1) and (2) of the Local Government Code, the environment and natural resources officer is also tasked under paragraph (b) (3) to do the following:

- i establish, maintain, protect and preserve communal forests, watersheds, tree parks, mangroves, greenbelts and similar forests projects and commercial forest, like industrial tree farms and agro-forestry projects;
- ii Provide extension services to beneficiaries of forest development projects and technical, financial and infrastructure assistance;
- iii Manage and maintain seed banks and produce seedlings for forests and tree parks;
- iv Provide extension services to beneficiaries of forest development projects and render assistance for natural resources-related conservation and utilization activities consistent with ecological balance;
- v Promote the small-scale mining and utilization of mineral resources, particularly mining of gold;
- vi Coordinate with government agencies and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of measures to prevent and control land, air and water pollution with the assistance of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

There are too many tasks on hand and far too much responsibility that needs to be shouldered that local governments should be exhorted to appoint an environment and natural resources officer.

Furthermore, the tasks and responsibilities require competencies and specialization that may not be available in the staffing of local government units. Hence, the mandatory appointment of an environment and natural resources officer in provinces, cities, and municipalities in the Metropolitan Manila has become not only necessary, but imperative.

The early approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.



**LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE**

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**AN ACT CHANGING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICER FROM OPTIONAL TO MANDATORY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 484(a) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991"**

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

1       **SECTION 1.** Section 484(a) of Republic Act No. 7160, as amended,  
2 otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991" is hereby  
3 further amended as follows:

4               "SEC. 484. *Qualifications, Powers and Duties.* – (a) xxx

5               "The appointment of the environment and natural  
6 resources officer is [optional] **MANDATORY** for provincial, city,  
7 **CAPITAL TOWNS** and **FIRST AND SECOND CLASS** municipal  
8 governments[.], **INCLUDING THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF**  
9 **PATEROS IN METRO MANILA: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE**  
10 **APPOINTMENT OF SAID OFFICER IS OPTIONAL FOR THIRD TO SIXTH**  
11 **CLASS MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS OUTSIDE METROPOLITAN**  
12 **MANILA."**

1       **SEC. 2.**   Section 443(b), 454(b) and 463(b) of the Local  
2   Government Code of 1991 insofar as the appointment of municipal, city  
3   and provincial environment and natural resources officer respectively, and  
4   any law, decree, executive order and rules and regulations inconsistent  
5   with this Act are hereby amended accordingly.

6       **SEC. 3.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
7   publication in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,