

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
 Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5372



**INTRODUCED BY ANAKPAWIS PARTY-LIST REPRESENTATIVE
 RAFAEL V. MARIANO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is an agricultural country and majority of Filipinos depend on farming and/or animal raising/ production as source of their livelihood. Animal raising/production includes the raising/production of cattle, carabao, goat, hog, chicken and duck, backyard or commercial. From 2001-2010, the country's average annual production of carabao has reached 135.82 thousand metric tons while average annual production of cattle has reached 249.41 thousand metric tons. For the same period, hog has an average annual production of 1,782.04 thousand metric tons and goat has 76.05 thousand metric tons. Chicken, on the other hand, has an average annual production of 1,226.17 thousand metric tons for the aforesaid period while duck has 46.07 thousand metric tons. (Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS))

On the other hand, the number of farm animals, from Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) to Tawi-tawi, in backyard and commercial farms has been recorded in the following manner:

Type of animals	Backyard (no. of heads) (as of July 1, 2011)	Commercial (no. of heads) (as of July 1, 2011)
Carabao	2,991,707	11,823
Cattle	2,323,567	169,907
Goat	3,688,643	65,945
Duck	7,416,068	2,648,315
Hogs	8,034,626	4,156,740

Source: Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS)

Type of Animal	No. of heads (as of July 1, 2011)
broiler	58,071,703
layers	30,453,363
native	76,678,717

Source: Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS)

Most of farms, backyard or commercial, for animal raising/production can be found in rural or far-flung areas in the country. However, despite the huge production and number of animals in the country, there is minimal, if not lack, of veterinary services in these areas since appointment of a

veterinarian officer is only mandatory in provincial and city governments. Republic Act No. 7160 otherwise known as "The Local Government Code of 1991" has made it optional for municipal governments to appoint a veterinarian officer.

Since the appointment of a veterinarian officer in municipal governments is optional, not every municipality in the country has a veterinarian officer. Because of this, most of animal raisers, especially those engaged in backyard animal raising, were deprived of veterinary services for reasons that they cannot afford the services of private veterinarians due to poverty or there is no veterinarian, private or public, in the area at all. They still have to wait for the provincial or city veterinarian officer to come and render veterinary services to their area. Sadly, the visit of provincial or city veterinarian officer cannot be determined with certainty.

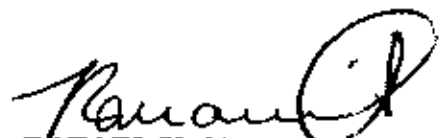
As a consequence of minimal, if not lack, of veterinary services, backyard animal raisers, tend to apply traditional medicines in treating animal diseases. Although traditional medications can cure animal illnesses, there is no guarantee that the diseases will be treated completely and their transmission to other animals will be immediately prevented. It is a fact that there are animal diseases that need the immediate attention of a veterinarian.

Moreover, the improper or inability in treating animal diseases may affect the production of animals which, in turn, will lessen the supply of livestock and poultry products in the market to the detriment of the public. Another, some animal diseases, if not treated completely or properly, might be transmitted to the people. These diseases include cat scratch disease, mad cow disease, brucellosis and many more.

The mandatory appointment of veterinarian officer in municipal governments, with proper support, can prevent and immediately address the problem of proliferation of dreaded animal diseases in the countryside since veterinary services will be within reach of the people. There will also be immediate delivery of veterinary services in far-flung barangays in the country wherein the production of farm animals is concentrated.

This measure also aims to expand the functions and duties of a veterinarian officer to enable those in the far-flung areas to avail of veterinary-related services, local and national.

In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this bill is urgently sought.


RAFAEL V. MARIANO

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AN ACT
AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Section 443 of Republic Act No. 7160 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 443. *Officials of the Municipal Government.* - (a) There shall be in each municipality a municipal mayor, a municipal vice-mayor, sangguniang bayan members, a secretary to the sangguniang bayan, a municipal treasurer, a municipal assessor, a municipal accountant, a municipal budget officer, a municipal planning and development coordinator, a municipal engineer/building official, a municipal health officer, **A MUNICIPAL VETERINARIAN** and a municipal civil registrar.

xxx"

SECTION 2. Section 489 of Republic Act No. 7160 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 489. *Qualifications, Powers and Duties.* - (a) No person shall be appointed veterinarian unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, [a resident of the local government concerned,] of good moral character, and a licensed doctor of veterinary medicine. He must have practiced his profession for at least three (3) years in the case of provincial or city veterinarian and at least one (1) year in the case of the municipal veterinarian.

The appointment of a veterinarian officer is mandatory for the provincial, [and] city **AND MUNICIPAL** governments.

(b) The veterinarian shall take charge of the office for veterinary services and shall:

(1) Formulate measures for the consideration of the sanggunian, and provide technical assistance and support to the governor or mayor, as the case may be, in carrying out measures to ensure the delivery of basic services and provision of adequate facilities pursuant to Section 17 of this Code;

(2) Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof by the governor or mayor, as the case may be, implement the same; particularly those which have to do with the veterinary-related activities which the governor or mayor is empowered to implement and which the sanggunian is empowered to provide for under this Code;

(3) In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the veterinarian shall:

(i) Advise the governor or the mayor, as the case may be, on all matters pertaining to the slaughter of animals for human consumption and the regulation of slaughterhouses;

(ii) Regulate the keeping of domestic animals

(iii) Regulate and inspect poultry, milk and dairy products for public consumption;

(iv) Enforce all laws and regulations for the prevention of cruelty to animals; [and]

(v) Take the necessary measures to eradicate, prevent or cure all forms of animal diseases; **AND**

(VI) VISIT AND RENDER VETERINARY SERVICES, AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK, TO EVERY BARANGAY OF THE CITY OR MUNICIPALITY WHERE THEY ARE APPOINTED. PROVINCIAL VETERINARIANS SHALL COORDINATE WITH CITY AND MUNICIPAL VETERINARIANS REGARDING THE CONDUCT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VETERINARY SERVICES WITHIN THEIR AREA OF JURISDICTION;

(4) Be in the frontline of veterinary related activities, such as in the outbreak of highly-contagious and deadly diseases, and in situations resulting in the depletion of animals for work and human consumption, particularly those arising from and in the aftermath of man-made and natural calamities and disasters;

(5) Recommend to the sanggunian and advise the governor or mayor, as the case may be, on all other matters relative to veterinary services which will increase the number and improve the quality of livestock, poultry and other domestic animals used for work or human consumption; [and]

(6) RECOMMEND TO THE SANGGUNIAN AND ADVISE THE GOVERNOR OR MAYOR, AS THE CASE MAY BE, TO SEEK FINANCIAL, TECHNICAL AND OTHER FORM OF ASSISTANCE FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VETERINARY-RELATED NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT CONCERNED;

(7) ASSIST THE GOVERNOR OR MAYOR, AS THE CASE MAY BE, IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VETERINARY-RELATED NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT CONCERNED; AND

(c) Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance."

SECTION 3. Repealing Clause. -All laws, executive orders, executive issuances or letter of instructions, or any part thereof, inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 4. Separability Clause. -If for any reason any section or provision of this act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts thereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SECTION 5. Effectivity Clause. -This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.