

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1879



Introduced by Rep. Wilfrido Mark M. Enverga

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State recognizes the role of the coconut industry in nation building and development due to the importance of coconut industry in the economy, it being one of the principal industries and one of the largest income earners of the country.

One third of the country's arable agricultural land or about 3.31million hectares is planted to coconut sprawling in sixty four (64) out of total seventy eight (78) provinces, and 1,195 out of the 1,554 municipalities in the country.

The coconut is a major source of foreign exchange and the Philippine coconut exports account for some 65% of the world traded coconut products. It is the top export earner on net basis considering that its raw materials and labor components are domestically based unlike other export products, and the Philippines supplies 64% of global coconut oil requirements.

Yet the productivity level of coconut still remains low due mainly to the lack of resources of farmers to buy agricultural inputs, tenurial problems, limited access to credit, lack of irrigation facilities, inadequate farm to market roads and post harvest and processing facilities, the indiscriminate cutting of productive trees and the increasing trend of conversion of coconut lands for other commercial and agricultural purposes and inadequate provisions of other support services i.e., value-added technology, extension services, information and others.

In 1997, the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act or AFMA was enacted to strengthen the Philippine agricultural research and development and extension systems. With the primary goal of transforming the agriculture and fisheries from resource-based into technology-based industries, an Integrated National Research and Development Program for each commodity or resource was formulated.

Pursuant to the mandate of AFMA, an integrated development planning for Mt. Banahaw Convergence Zone of Quezon Province (SAFDZ) was conducted in 2002 identifying coconut among 5 commodities covered by the said plan. The plan advocated four essential development strategies to be undertaken. Among these is the enhanced production and productivity of selected commodities through sustained and expanded provisions of support services, e.g., technology, high-yielding varieties, extension services, information etc.

Hence the need for creating an accessible coconut research, development and extension center becomes imperative to make the industry nationally productive and globally competitive.

The Center will play the significant role of pursuing and promoting research and development in response to the development requirements of the coconut communities not only the province of Quezon but in the country as well.

Quezon being one of the biggest producers of coconut in the country is an appropriate place for such research and development (R&D) activities. The province has a yearly production of close to one million metric tons and horticulturists have also identified Quezon as the area "most suitable" for raising coconuts.

Southern Luzon State University (SLSU), which is the premiere academic institution in Quezon, would be a conducive venue for the Center. The University is likewise an active member of the Quezon Provincial Coconut Development Council mandated to take positive steps towards the development and rehabilitation of the coconut industry in the province.

Thus, the establishment of the Center based at the SLSU shall very well help catalyze the advancement of coconut research, development and extension to make the industry nationally productive and globally competitive.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



WILFRIDO MARK M. ENVERGA

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

SEC. 2. The Coconut Research, Development and Extension Center shall be based in the Southern Luzon State University located at Municipality of Lucban, Province of Quezon.

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1 **SEC. 4.** The Center shall have the following objectives:

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- 3 (1) To conduct agricultural, industrial and economic research and
- 4 development of the coconut industry for the benefits of the Filipino coconut farmers;
- 5 (2) To acquire, develop and propagate improved plant materials and technology;
- 6 (3) To train professionals, students and coconut farmers and their children on various
- 7 disciplines related to coconut production, utilization, and marketing;
- 8 (4) To design and implement, in coordination with institutions of higher learning local
- 9 and foreign scholarships and fellowship programs on academic fields that will
- 10 enhance coconut development;
- 11 (5) To organize and hold local, regional or international conferences, gatherings, forums
- 12 and seminars on the current trends and developments of the coconut industry;
- 13 (6) To consolidate all researches by other institutions, as well as to establish, maintain
- 14 and operate an information and library center;
- 15 (7) To design and implement a farm extension program to effectively transfer modern
- 16 farm technology to coconut farmers; and
- 17 (8) To publish and disseminate research findings and make appropriate recommendations
- 18 to interested parties.
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20 **SEC. 5.** The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in

21 the General Appropriation Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

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23 **SEC. 6.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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25 APPROVED,

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