

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2723



Introduced by **HON. RONALD M. COSALAN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to amend Section 482(a), Article 12 of The Local Government Code, making it mandatory for municipal government units to appoint an agriculturist.

Sec. 17 of the Code provides that local government units shall endeavor to be self-reliant and provide certain basic services and facilities in their area. Subsection (b)(2)(i) of said section provides that Municipalities are mandated to provide extension and on-site research services and facilities related to agriculture and fishery activities, including dispersal of livestock and poultry; palay, corn and vegetable seed farms, medicinal plant gardens, fruit trees, coconut and other kinds of seedling nurseries; demonstration farms, interbarangay irrigation system, water and soil resource utilization and conservation projects, and others.

Further, in Section 482, the Agriculturist is mandated to perform various functions, namely: (1) to formulate measures and provide technical assistance and support to ensure delivery of basic services and provision of adequate facilities relative to agricultural services; (2) to develop plans and strategies and implement those dealing with agricultural programs and projects, among others, (3) to ensure maximum assistance and access to resources in the production, processing and marketing of agricultural and aqua-cultural and marine products to farmers, fishermen and local entrepreneurs; (4) to conduct agricultural researches and assist in making available appropriate technology and disseminate information on crops, plant diseases and pests and other agricultural matters; (5) to enforce rules and regulations relating to agriculture and aquaculture; and (6) to coordinate with government and non-government offices to promote agricultural productivity.

An agriculturist is, therefore, the frontliner in the formulation, planning and delivery of basic agricultural services even in municipalities. However, the Local Government Code only requires provincial governments to appoint such an officer, and leaves to the discretion of the municipality whether one will be appointed or not despite the importance of the functions he execute.

Agriculture remains to be the traditional industry in most provinces and municipalities outside the capital cities in the country. The Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011-2016 recognizes that the agriculture industry provides food and vital raw materials for the rest of the economy. Increasing productivity and efficiency in this sector will be crucial in maintaining the affordability of food and purchasing power, especially among the poor. Thus, development in agriculture is vital in achieving inclusive growth and poverty reduction and attaining the goals under the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs). This amendment could facilitate the delivery of basic agricultural services in municipalities and the accomplishment of these goals and policies.

It is for these reasons that support for and prompt passage of this proposed bill is earnestly sought.



HON. RONALD M. COSALAN
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Lone District, Benguet Province (CAR)

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Introduced by **HON. RONALD M. COSALAN**

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 482(a), ARTICLE 12 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, TO REQUIRE THE MANDATORY APPOINTMENT OF AGRICULTURIST IN MUNICIPALITIES

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

SECTION 1. Section 482(a), Article 12 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the *Local Government Code of 1991*, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 482. *Qualifications, Powers and Duties.*

“(a) No person shall be appointed agriculturist unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree in agriculture or any related course from a recognized college or university and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have practiced his profession in agriculture or acquired experience in a related field for at least five (5) years in the case of the provincial and city agriculturist, and three (3) years in the case of the municipal agriculturist.

“The position of an agriculturist shall be mandatory for the provincial AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS and optional for the city [and municipal]government[s].”

SECTION 2. All other laws which are inconsistent with the above-mentioned following provisions shall be deemed repealed or amended as appropriate.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) national papers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,