

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

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3480



Introduced by Rep. CHRISTOPHER S. CO, and Rep. RODEL M. BATOCABE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to make the appointment of a municipal agriculturist mandatory in agricultural municipalities while optional in cities and other municipalities by amending the Section 482, Republic Act No. 7160 Local Government Code. By making the office of the municipal agriculturist mandatory, the needs of the farmers, fishermen, and local entrepreneurs in agricultural municipalities are addressed.

The Local Government Code devolved to local government units the functions and responsibilities of national agencies and offices where such basic services and facilities include, among others, agricultural support services to barangays, and agricultural extension and on-site research services and facilities in municipalities and provinces. The devolution also includes the transfer to local government units of the records, equipment, and other assets and personnel of national agencies and offices corresponding to the devolved powers, functions, and responsibilities. (Section 17, RA 7160)

However, while Philippines is primarily an agricultural country and agricultural services is one of the basic services for local government units, agriculturists in every municipality is only optional under the Local Government Code. The mandatory appointment of an agriculturist in provinces is not enough for the useful distribution of agricultural and other related services.

The devolution of services under the Local Government Code hampered the delivery of agricultural services to the farming community because of the lack of available agriculturists in agricultural communities in municipalities, whose appointment are only optional under the Local Government Code. As a result, agricultural municipalities are not supported by an effective extension capacity because of the lack or absence of agricultural experts and personnel. This has greatly affected the production and service of the farming communities.

It is not only proper but also favorable to require agriculturists in agricultural municipalities who can provide technical information and special services to farmers in order to improve quality and yield of crops and livestock.

In light of these circumstances, the swift passage of the bill is earnestly sought.


Rep. CHRISTOPHER S. CO
Ako Bicol Party-List


Rep. RODEL M. BATOCABE
Ako Bicol Party-List

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AN ACT
MAKING THE POSITION OF THE MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURIST MANDATORY,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 442 AND 482 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991".

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

SECTION 1. Section 442 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991", is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 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 civil registrar, AND A MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURIST, IN AGRICULTURAL MUNICIPALITIES.

(c) In addition thereto, the mayor may appoint a municipal administrator, a municipal legal officer, a municipal agriculturist IN NON-AGRICULTURAL MUNICIPALITIES, a municipal environment and natural resources officer, a municipal social welfare and development officer, a municipal architect, and a municipal information officer.

SECTION 2. Section 482 of Republic Act No. 7160, 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 the agriculturist shall be mandatory for the provincial AND

**AGRICULTURAL MUNICIPALITIES AND OPTIONAL FOR THE CITY AND
OTHER MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS.**

SECTION 3. The Land Management Division, Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Department of Agriculture shall conduct land resources evaluation, survey, and classification to determine the land use of all municipalities; Provided, that municipalities which are determined to be sixty percent (60%) agricultural shall be considered an agricultural municipality for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and every year thereafter.

SECTION 5. All laws, decrees, regulations or issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.