

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5297



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES
FERNANDO L. HICAP, NERI J. COLMENARES, CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN, EMMI A. DE JESUS, ANTONIO TINIO
AND TERRY L. RIDON

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is an agricultural country, with the livelihood of the majority of its population directly dependent on farming. Farming generally includes, thru both backyard and commercial operations, the raising and production of farm animals such as cattle, carabao, goat, hog, chicken and duck.

From 2001 to 2013, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS), the country's average annual production of carabao was at 137.68 metric thousand tons, while cattle was at 250.98 thousand metric tons. For the same period, average annual production of hog was at 1,826.65 thousand metric tons, goat was at 76.13 thousand metric tons, chicken was at 1,285.40 thousand metric tons, and duck was at 43.24 thousand metric tons.

Based on the 2014 national livestock and poultry data of the BAS for January to June, the number of farm animals in both backyard and commercial farms are as follows:

Type of Animals	Backyard (no. of heads)	Commercial (no. of heads)
Carabao	2,844,344	12,417
Cattle	2,352,848	166,639
Goat	3,648,422	60,032
Duck	7,426,868	2,842,336
Hog	7,741,714	4,240,289

Source: Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS), January to June, 2014.

Chicken Type	No. of heads in million
Broilers	64.70
Layers	29.23
Native	78.48

Source: Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS), January to June, 2014.

Most animal raising and production farms are found in rural or far-flung areas in the country where there is, unfortunately, despite consistently high rate of livestock and poultry production, a pervasive dearth of veterinary services. This can be largely attributable to the fact that the law, particularly Republic Act No. 7160 or The Local Government Code of 1991, specifies that only provincial and city governments are mandatorily required to appoint a veterinarian officer, leaving a great number of municipalities for the most part deprived of access to much-needed public veterinary support and assistance.

Animal raisers, especially those engaged in backyard operations and are poor, usually cannot afford the services of private veterinarians. They are often made to wait for the provincial or city veterinarian to visit their area, a very rare occasion, in fact, which comes at no certain time.

Backyard animal raisers are, thus, practically left to themselves in treating animal diseases. They employ traditional forms and ways that do not necessarily guarantee either a quick fix or the prevention of such diseases from being transmitted to other animals or, worse, to people. There are obviously animal diseases, such as cat scratch disease, mad cow disease, and brucellosis, among others, that need the immediate attention and professional expertise of duly licensed veterinarians.

Moreover, failure to properly treat animal diseases naturally jeopardizes the supply of livestock and poultry products in the market, to the detriment of the public and the economy.

Thus, this bill, filed previously by former Anakpawis Party-list Representative Rafael Mariano on October 2011 during the second regular session of the Fifteenth Congress, is here being refiled with the intent of amending certain provisions of Republic Act No. 7160 or The Local Government Code of 1991 in order to prescribe the mandatory appointment of veterinarian officers not only in provincial and city governments but also in municipal units.

This legislative measure seeks to decisively address the proliferation of contagious and harmful animal diseases in the countryside and the immediate delivery of public veterinary services to far-flung villages where the raising and production of farm animals is concentrated.

This measure also aims to expand certain functions and duties of a veterinarian officer in order to more adequately and regularly serve the veterinary needs of remote communities.

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



REP. FERNANDO L. HICAP
ANAKPAWIS Party-list



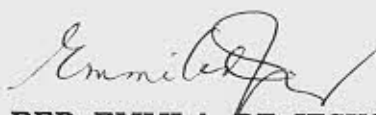
REP. NERI J. COLMENARES
BAYAN MUNA Party-list



REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
BAYAN MUNA Party-list



REP. LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN
GABRIELA Women's Party



REP. EMMI A. DE JESUS
GABRIELA Women's Party



REP. ANTONIO TINIO
ACT Teachers Party



REP. TERRY L. RIDON
KABATAAN Party-list

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5297

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES
FERNANDO L. HICAP, NERI J. COLMENARES, CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN, EMMI A. DE JESUS, ANTONIO TINIO
AND TERRY L. RIDON

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY APPOINTMENT OF A MUNICIPAL
VETERINARIAN OFFICER, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN
PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991"

*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 MAYBE, 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.