

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **4358**



Introduced by **Hon. PIMENTEL, JOHNNY T.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

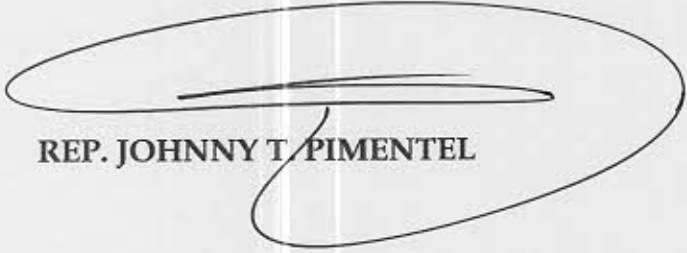
In a report on the state of Philippine agriculture, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture said that the programs of the department for this new administration will focus on (1) staple food commodities to ensure food security and (2) high value crops to generate jobs and foreign earnings. To quote the report, "to achieve food sufficiency and maximum productivity in the country, the Department of Agriculture under President Duterte must undertake the implementation of the basic foundations of a sound agriculture and fisheries program." At the core of this national program is the Rice Productivity Enhancement (RIPE) program which calls for a thorough review of the country's water management and irrigation policies, among others. Quoting from the report, the country will have a "shift in the irrigation mindset. This administration will focus more on small and community-based irrigation projects over the highly destructive, expensive, and long-gestating mega-irrigation projects which costs billions of pesos." There is thus a need to revisit the irrigation component in our agricultural sector.

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) was created by law in 1963 principally to address the needs of the irrigation age and to investigate and study all available and possible water resources in the Philippines, primarily for irrigation purposes, to plan, design, construct and/or improve all types of irrigation projects and appurtenant structures (Section 2, RA 3601, as amended by P.D. 552 and P.D.

1702). For this purpose, the NIA has been given the necessary flexibility of a corporate vehicle and the administrative autonomy to achieve its statutory objectives.

Despite this, about 2.4 million hectares or 43% of farm lands in the Philippines still lack irrigation. Currently, the irrigation projects of NIA are supported by organizations such as the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. The country needs a more streamlined, small-scale, yet far-reaching irrigation development program that can be done here and now and this bill provides the impetus for this goal.

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



REP. JOHNNY T. PIMENTEL

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **4358**

Introduced by **Hon. PIMENTEL, JOHNNY T.**

1 AN ACT
2 CREATING A STREAMLINED NATIONAL IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT
3 PROGRAM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
4 PURPOSES

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

5 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as "The National Irrigation
6 Program of 2016."

7 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* -It is the policy of the State to pursue a
8 comprehensive agricultural development, through effective and progressive
9 irrigation programs. Guided by the principle of self-sufficiency, the agricultural
10 sector shall make full use of human and natural resources

11 In pursuit of the goals of genuine rural development, the State shall promote
12 a viable rural agricultural economy by raising farm productivity at competitive and
13 market sufficiency levels through the provision of irrigation infrastructure and
14 comprehensive support services for farmers.

1 SECTION 3. *National Irrigation Program.* - The National Government shall
2 undertake a comprehensive irrigation program, guided by the following objectives:

3 (a) Generation, restoration and rehabilitation of community-based
4 irrigation systems and facilities using progressive and modern irrigation methods;

5 (b) Reformulation and upgrading of the methods of irrigation through
6 continued research and development and application of technological advancements
7 in the field of irrigation;

8 (c) Strengthened coordination with local government units, cooperatives,
9 farmers' associations, non-governmental organizations, and technical assistance and
10 development of the irrigation systems used in their respective areas and
11 jurisdictions;

12
13 SECTION 4. *Streamlined Irrigation Development Program.* - In line with the
14 national policy objectives, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is mandated
15 to expedite its irrigation development programs and be able to irrigate ninety-five
16 percent (95%) of irrigable lands all over the country, within a period of three (3)
17 years from the effectivity of this Act. After the lapse of the three year period, the NIA
18 shall then submit to Congress a detailed report and satisfactory proof of its
19 completion of the ninety-five-percent target.

20
21 SECTION 5. *Continuing Research and Development.* - The NIA shall conduct
22 continuing research and development as well as application of technological
23 advancements in the field of irrigation. This shall include the viability of the

1 introducing solar-powered irrigation facilities to benefit remote villages that are not
2 connected to a power grid.
3

4 SECTION 6. *Technical Assistance to Stakeholders.* - The NIA shall provide
5 technical and financial assistance to local government units, cooperatives, farmers'
6 associations, and nongovernmental organizations with respect to irrigation systems
7 located, utilized, and managed in their respective jurisdictions.
8

9 SECTION 7. *Abolition of irrigation fees.* - Irrigation Services Fees (ISF) and other
10 kinds of irrigation fees shall no longer be charged upon effectivity of this Act. All
11 unpaid irrigation fees shall be restructured under terms and conditions that are not
12 oppressive to the farmers.
13

14 SECTION 8. *Funding.* - The amount of one billion pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) is
15 hereby appropriated for the implementation of this Act. After the initial year of
16 implementation, the same amount shall be included in the budget of the NIA.
17

18 SECTION 9. *Submission of Detailed Status Report to Congress.* - The NIA is
19 hereby mandated to furnish Congress a detailed status report of its programs,
20 targets and accomplishments for the preceding five (5) years. This is without
21 prejudice to the NIA's obligation to furnish Congress with a Fiscal Report under
22 Article VI, Section 11 of R.A. 3601.
23

1 SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*. - Within 60 days upon
2 effectivity of this Act, the NIA, through the Secretary of the Department of
3 Agriculture, shall initiate the convening of Technical Working Group to promulgate
4 the IRR of this Act with relevant stakeholders.

5
6 SECTION 11. *Separability Clause*. - If any provision, or part hereof is held
7 invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise
8 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

9 SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause*. - Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
10 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation
11 contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed,
12 modified, or amended accordingly.

13
14 SECTION 13. *Effectivity Clause*. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
15 after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,