

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4801



Introduced by **Honorable Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano**

Explanatory Note

Republic Act No. 10176 was enacted with the purpose of reviving Arbor Day in recognition of the role and importance of forests in the ecological balance of the environment. The Law recognized further the need to bring back the once lush forests of the country by institutionalizing a mechanism for collaborative efforts of various sectors of the population in such efforts. The Law gave the Local Government Units (LGUs) the responsibility of spearheading the tree planting efforts.

To ensure compliance of the provisions of the Law it requires LGU from the provinces, cities/municipalities and component barangays to pass a resolution or ordinance designating a day of the year for the observance of Arbor Day or tree planting/growing. It also required the LGUs to report to the DILG the day of such Arbor Day observance. Furthermore, the Law mandates the LGUs to allocate a budget to implement the annual tree planting/growing. It is not known however, if all provinces, cities/municipalities and component barangays have passed such resolutions/ordinances for the observance of Arbor Day and if the LGUs have been allocating funds for its implementation after 4 years since its passage. Congress should be informed of the compliance of LGUs on such an important legislation.

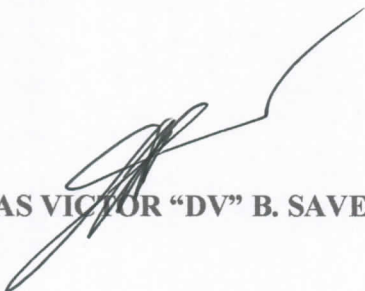
In implementing the intents of the Law, each province, city and municipality is required to create an Arbor Day Celebration Committee the composition of which shall be selected by the concerned local chief executive. For the LGUs that have not passed the necessary resolution or ordinance on the observance of Arbor Day it is expected that they have not created a Celebration Committee.

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) in coordination with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) are mandated to supply the LGUs with planting materials. The Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA No. 10176 also required the DENR, the Department Education (DepED), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) as well as the Liga ng mga Barangay to establish nurseries and produce planting materials for distribution to LGUs or for their own use. Other national agencies have also been assigned various tasks in the implementation of the Arbor Day Law. Again it is not known if these agencies have been performing the tasks that they have been assigned.

In 1999 government adopted a strategy for planning and implementing national programs called convergence initiative (CI). National Convergence Initiative (NCI) was formulated as the framework for sustainable rural development and poverty reduction. This was formalized through the issuance of Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 01 Series of 1999 signed jointly by the 3 leading government agencies in-charge of rural development focusing on agriculture, agrarian reform and natural resources, the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The implementation of Arbor Day Law could be an effective vehicle for pursuing the objectives of the national convergence initiative which are to: 1) facilitate the implementation of different agencies to ***ensure that resources are maximized*** by achieving synergy and institutional efficiency; 2) ***build partnership*** between and among the local communities, LGUs and government agencies to ensure that all development interventions are based on actual needs and aspirations of the community; 3) ***expand opportunities*** for agro-enterprise and agribusiness development for its constituency; and 4) ***achieve spatial integration within different ecosystems*** to ensure environmental integrity and sustainability¹

There are 81 provinces, 1,490 municipalities and 145 cities and 42,029 *barangays*² in the country. Granting that each *barangay* plant only 1 ha each year and maintain these in good condition there would be 42,000 ha of degraded land rehabilitated annually. The issue here is whether the local government units are implementing the law or are even aware of it.

To achieve the intent and purpose of RA No. 10176 which is to rehabilitate the denuded forests in order that they will be able to provide needed ecological and environmental services and to combat the adverse effects of climate change as well as provide resources for livelihood projects of rural communities it is earnestly requested that this Act be approved.



DEOGRACIAS VICTOR "DV" B. SAVELLANO

¹ NCI Operations Manual

² https://www.google.com.ph/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=howmany_barangaysinthe_philippines2014

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**An Act Amending Certain Provisions of Republic Act No. 10176 Otherwise Known as
An Act Reviving the Observance of Arbor Day by Authorizing the Local Government
Units the Responsibilities for Celebrating the Day for Tree Planting as an Annual Event
and for Other Purposes**

*Be enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress
Assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Title*. - This Act shall be known as the "Arbor Day Amendment Law"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy* – It is the policy of the state to provide a healthful environment by rehabilitating degraded forest land areas, reduce soil erosion, improve soil fertility, improve land productivity and reduce poverty especially in the rural and upland areas.

SECTION 3. *Objective* – It is the objective of this Act to improve the implementation of RA No. 10176 otherwise known as the Arbor Day Law of 2012 increase the response of local government units (LGUs) in implementing the law and improve the efficiency of the Department Interior and Local Government (DILG) in supervising and monitoring the implementation of the law.

SECTION 4. *Congressional Oversight Committee* – There shall be established a Congressional Oversight Committee to be co-chaired by the Chair of the Local Government Committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The members shall include the Chair of the Natural Resources Committee and the Chair of Reforestation Committee of the House of Representatives and the Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources in the Senate.

SECTION 5. *Duties of the Congressional Oversight Committee* – The following are the duties and functions of the Congressional Oversight Committee:

1. Receive and analyze the annual reports of the Department of Interior and Local Government on the implementation of RA No. 10176;
2. Identify strategies to encourage LGUs to vigorously implement the Law

SECTION 6. *Duties of the Department of Interior and Local Government* – It is the duty of the Department of Interior and Local Government to monitor the implementation of RA No. 10176 and report annually to the Congressional Oversight Committee.

SECTION 7. *Duties of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources* - It is the duty of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to provide annually forestland areas where the LGUs can grow trees or bamboos as implementation of the Law. It is also the duty of the DENR to report to the Congressional Oversight Committee the areas that it has made available to LGUs for tree/bamboo growing.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. – The Department of Interior and Local Government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days after its approval.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause*. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid.

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

SECTION 11. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its full publication in the Official Gazette or two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,