

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City  
**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5580**



Introduced by Representative H. Harry L. Roque Jr.

AN ACT REVOKING THE IRRIGATION SERVICE FEES (ISFs) IMPOSED ON FARMERS BY THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3601, PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 552 AND PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1702

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is a government-owned and controlled corporation primarily responsible for irrigation development and management. The NIA's functions include the planning, designing, construction, and improvement of all types of irrigation projects. It is also tasked to operate, maintain, and administer all national irrigation systems.

Under its Charter, the NIA is allowed to charge Irrigation Service Fees or ISFs in exchange for providing irrigation to farmers, depending on the size of their farmlands. The ISFs were abolished by then President Joseph Estrada when he delivered his first State of the Nation Address in 1998 but were reinstated when NIA sought the adoption of a socialized irrigation fee system, as mandated by Administrative Order No. 17 of August 1998. The ISFs are intermittently suspended, especially in times of calamities when it was unreasonable to impose additional fees on farmers.

However, there is a need to revisit the status quo. Irrigation is a very basic governmental function that can very easily be shouldered by the State. It does not have to be passed on to farmers.

Considering that it is a key factor in increasing agricultural productivity, having the State subsidize it will go a long way in ensuring adequate food supply and the early recovery of the principal means of livelihood of people in disaster-hit and poverty-stricken areas. Thus, it is the intention of this bill to revoke the ISF and to make irrigation services free for all farmers.

It is for this reason that the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

H. HARRY L. ROQUE, JR.

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1 AN ACT REVOKING THE IRRIGATION SERVICE FEES (ISFs) IMPOSED ON FARMERS BY THE NATIONAL  
2 IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC  
3 ACT NO. 3601, PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 552 AND PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1702

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

4 SECTION 1. Short Title. "This Act shall be known as the "Free Irrigation Services Act."

5 SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to adhere to the  
6 principle of integrated and holistic program of support services that will alleviate the situation of  
7 farmers to enable them to attain their full potentials as productive forces of society.

8 The State adheres to the promotion of a comprehensive rural development program through  
9 increased agricultural production and the adoption of necessary and sound measures to accelerate  
10 the achievement of self-sufficiency in food, equitable access to opportunities and sustained  
11 productivity as key strategies to raise the quality of life in rural areas and overall national  
12 development.

13 Toward this objective, it shall endeavor to provide the necessary and vital support services and  
14 assistance to farmers, including but not limited to inputs to production, production support, post-  
15 harvest facilities and irrigation services.

16 SECTION 3. Revocation of the Irrigation Service Fees (ISF)- Upon the passage of this Act, all farmer  
17 beneficiaries shall be exempt from the payment of the Irrigation Service Fees (ISFs) and the collection  
18 thereof, including the collection of back accounts and the corresponding penalties therefore from  
19 irrigation systems constructed, funded, and/or managed by the National Irrigation Administration,  
20 shall be revoked immediately. In this regard, Section 2(c) of Republic Act 3601, Section 1(b) of

1 Presidential Decree 552, and Section 1(b) of Presidential Decree 1702 are hereby repealed  
2 accordingly.

3 SECTION 4. Construction, Repair and Maintenance of National Irrigation A Systems. -For the purpose  
4 of ensuring the continuity of the necessary construction, repair and maintenance of irrigation  
5 systems administered by the National Irrigation Administration, the required amounts for the same  
6 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

7 SECTION 5. Government Subsidy for the Management of Irrigation System. The State shall provide  
8 the necessary subsidies to farmers and irrigators associations and cooperatives to ensure the  
9 effective and grassroots-based management of irrigation systems, the funding of which shall likewise  
10 be included in the annual GAA.

11 SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. - All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letters of  
12 instruction, administrative orders, rules or regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act, or  
13 which may be construed, either expressly or impliedly, to grant the National Irrigation  
14 Administration the power to levy any kind of irrigation fee or other kind of monetary imposition, are  
15 hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

16 SECTION 7. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act or the application of such provision to  
17 any person or circumstance is declared invalid, the remainder of the Act or the application of such  
18 provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected by such declaration. A

19 SECTION 8. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) daysafter its publication in the  
20 Official Gazette and newspaper of general circulation.

21 Approved,