

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **6154**



Introduced by **REP. MANUEL ANTONIO F. ZUBIRI**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the policy of the State to promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform by making full and efficient use of human and natural resources in order to be competitive in both domestic and foreign markets. Since the Philippines is first and foremost an agricultural nation, true economic development and food security can only be attained if both the public and private sectors take the critical steps to preserve, support and protect our nation's agricultural industry.

While agricultural productivity has grown in leaps and bounds over the years through the invaluable efforts of institutions such as the locally-headquartered International Rice Research Institute which is credited for averting famine in Asia, the Philippine Government has not provided enough support by way of linking our farmers to the rest of the nation. To this end, it is imperative that the National Government take the lead in spearheading efforts to building the necessary support facilities that would facilitate the movement of agricultural products from initial production to final consumption. To this end, the National Government must take the necessary concrete steps to invest in and build barangay roads and other local roads to link producers to consumers. These barangay and local roads, in addition to farm to market roads will greatly improve the mobility of agricultural products, services and other key players, but also make job opportunities more accessible and facilitate the provision of basic social services to the *common tao*, especially those living in the more inaccessible parts of the country.

As we have seen in the past years, the national government has prioritized the development of primary and national roads, bridges and other thoroughfares, leaving the necessary support or feeder roads or those classified as "local roads", most especially in the rural areas, to the responsibility of their respective local governments. It is an ineluctable fact that not all local government units have enough income to fund the construction of concrete support or feeder roads and subsequently provide for their maintenance. Over the years, this glaring disparity in budgetary priority between national and local roads results in unsold and wasted produce that could have augmented the meager earnings of our nation's ageing farmers and helped alleviate the suffering of the millions of Filipinos who do not have access to cheap but good quality food which our nation produces in great abundance. Worse, our nation's very own food security is threatened since the youth are leaving their parents' farms in hopes of seeking greener pastures elsewhere. With the average age of the Filipino farmer hovering in the late 50's, who will produce our food when they finally retire in a few years?

This most unfortunate bias against local feeder roads can be gleaned from the fact that for the year 2018, the proposed budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways, which does not fund the construction of farm to market roads, is P643.3 billion, the great bulk of which is concentrated in highly-urbanized and hyper-developed areas. Meanwhile, the budget allocated

to the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year 2018, the only government agency funding the establishment of farm to market roads is only P6 billion for the country's 42,036 barangays (as of the filing of this bill).

Since the instant Bill hopes to substantially improve and expand our nation's network of local feeder roads, it is hoped that national development would be spurred – not only from the marked improvement in the movement of agricultural products and services from the point of production to the point of consumption but in so many other critical areas such as food security, job creation and accessibility, rural-wide investments, etc.

Thus, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

MANUEL ANTONIO F. ZUBIRI

Representative

3rd District, Bukidnon

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**AN ACT MANDATING THE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOCATE FUNDS
FOR BARANGAY ROADS AND OTHER LOCAL ROADS**

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

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “**Barangay and Other Local Roads Act of 2017**”.

Section 2. Declaration of State Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to provide support to agriculture and its related industries through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing and other support services.

To this end, the State shall give adequate support to Filipino agricultural workers by constructing and completing farm to market, barangay, and other roads to expedite the transportation of farm products and provision of other related services.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. –

“**DA**” shall refer to the Department of Agriculture.

“**DPWH**” shall refer to the Department of Public Works and Highways.

“**DSWD**” shall refer to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

“**IRA**” shall refer to the Internal Revenue Allotment received by a local government unit as its distributive share in the revenues from the National Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

“**Local Government Units**” shall include provinces, cities, municipalities, barangays and autonomous areas in the Philippines.

“**NAPC**” shall refer to the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

“**PSA**” shall refer to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

Section 4. Scope. – This Act shall cover all local government units.

Section 5. Allocation from the national government. – The government, through the DPWH, DA, and such other agencies that have the authority to develop public roads and other thoroughfares within the territory of the Republic of the Philippines, shall henceforth include in its budget an allocation for the construction and completion of farm to market roads, barangay roads, and other local roads for all local government units.

The poorest local government units shall have the highest priority for the development of such roads mentioned in this Act. The socioeconomic status of said local government units shall be determined using the data from the appropriate government agencies such as the PSA, NAPC and DSWD.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to remove, reduce or otherwise diminish the present responsibility and commitment of local government units to fund and/or spearhead the construction and completion of their own farm to market, barangay roads, and other local roads through their IRA and other sources of revenues.

Section 6. Responsibility for Administration and Enforcement. – After the completion of the farm to market, barangay, and other local roads, it shall be the primary duty of the local governments to effectively enforce the provisions of this Act.

It shall also be the responsibility of such local government units to maintain and keep the cleanliness and orderliness of the aforementioned local roads. Furthermore, the local government units shall perform such other functions as may be necessary for preservation of the farm to market, barangay, and other local roads.

Section 7. Appropriation. – The funds required for the implementation of this Act shall be taken from the budget of the DPWH for the current fiscal year.

Thereafter, the amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year immediately following its enactment into law and subsequent thereto.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DPWH, DA, PSA, NAPC, DPWH and other such concerned agencies, shall adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations, to carry out the provisions of this Act and which shall be effective fifteen (15) days following their publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) major daily newspapers of general circulation.

Section 9. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to this Act are hereby deemed accordingly repealed or amended.

Section 11. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.