

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6458**



Introduced by Representative Sharon S. Garin

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has a total of 10.3 million hectares as agricultural lands, out of this, 3.1 million hectares are considered irrigable. As of December 2015, about 1.731 million hectares or 57.33% have been developed for irrigation. The remaining 1.3 million hectares remain to be irrigated.

Small-scale irrigation, which refers to small community-managed irrigation systems, offers a particular low-cost solution in meeting the country's farms' need for water, and in providing other benefits as well. There is no question that irrigation development alleviates poverty either directly, by increasing agricultural production, income, and labor availability, or indirectly by second generation effects, including improved access to education and health development of services for farmers.

Traditional large-scale irrigation is costly and takes a long time to complete, and is often times not suitable with our local farms, many of which are small-scale and community driven, which is why the development of small-scale irrigation makes much more sense. Small-scale irrigation also contributes lesser environmental impacts compared to large-scale irrigation, and thus makes for more ecologically friendly solution, particularly with the advent of climate change. Furthermore, small-scale irrigation systems have multiple alternative uses aside from watering crops. This includes fish farming, local water supply, groundwater recharge, flood mitigation among others.

This bills seeks to construct small-scale irrigation systems, not just in rural, but even in urban areas, where such a project is feasible. The systems to be built are the following: Pump Irrigation System from Open Sources, Rainwater Harvesting System, Small Diversion Dams, Shallow Tube Wells, Small Water Impounding Projects, and Small Farm Reservoirs.

This bill would lead to increased agricultural production, comprehensive rural development, and sustainable development of water resources. In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


SHARON S. GARIN
AAMBIS-Owa Partylist

1 Republic of the Philippines
2 HOUSE OR REPRESENTATIVES
3 Quezon City, Metro Manila

4
5 Seventeenth Congress
6 Second Regular Session

7
8 HOUSE BILL NO. **6458**
9

10 Introduced by Representative Sharon S. Garin
11
12

13 AN ACT
14 TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, PROMOTE RURAL
15 DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOP WATER CONSERVATION TECHNIQUES BY
16 PROVIDING FOR A TEN-YEAR SMALL-SCALE IRRIGATION SYSTEM
17 PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

18 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress*
19 *assembled:*
20

21 SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Small-Scale Irrigation System*
22 *Act*"

23 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the national policy to:

- 24 a) Increase agricultural production through the provision of innovative, inexpensive and
25 accessible irrigation small scale infrastructure facilities, rainwater and runoff
26 harvesting facilities such as small water impounding projects, small farm reservoirs,
27 small diversion dams, spring development, shallow tube wells, and pump irrigation
28 systems from open sources;
- 29 b) Promote comprehensive rural development through increased agricultural production
30 and sustained productivity as key strategies to raise the quality of rural life and
31 national development; and,
- 32 c) Advance the principle of sustainable development of water resources and an
33 integrated water resources management framework with a holistic and systematic
34 approach that recognizes that infrastructure development alone is not a guarantee for

1 productivity and sustainability but should be combined with watershed development
2 and management, research and development and more importantly, the provision of
3 necessary extension services to the farmer-beneficiaries to ensure the functionality of
4 their systems.

5 **SEC. 3. Objectives and Mandate.** – The Department of Agriculture (DA) - Bureau of
6 Soils and Water Management (BSWM) shall undertake a ten-year program for the
7 construction of small-scale irrigation system projects, not just in rural, but even in urban
8 areas, where such a project is feasible. The DA-BSWM shall:

- 9 a) serve as the technical and administrative secretariat of the program;
- 10 b) undertake research, development and extension on appropriate and cost-efficient
11 systems for collection, storage and utilization of rainwater. In consultation with
12 relevant stakeholders;
- 13 c) formulate and implement a comprehensive national rainwater harvesting program for
14 research, development and extension of appropriate technologies on rainwater
15 harvesting and small-scale irrigation structures;
- 16 d) embark on capacity building of farmers and city and local government engineers on
17 community-based and cost-efficient rainwater harvesting and small-scale irrigation
18 systems and structures;
- 19 e) design and formulate incentives for local stakeholders and monitor and evaluate this
20 program;
- 21 f) develop water conservation techniques by optimizing the use of excess water during
22 the rainy season for future needs, provide environmental benefits such as flood
23 control, soil conservation and groundwater recharge, reduce dependence on water

1 supplied by commercial service providers and serve as a good measure to adapt to the
2 adverse effects of climate change; and,

- 3 g) prepare a comprehensive 5-year work program with annual targets for the irrigation
4 development of new small-scale irrigation system projects.

5 The DA-BWSM shall spearhead the construction and guarantee that all small-scale
6 irrigation system programs and projects to be undertaken herein shall be completed and made
7 fully operational or implementable within the duration of the ten (10) - year program. This is
8 with provision for sustainability of operation and maintenance of said systems after the
9 program completion, including institutionalization of a comprehensive package of
10 infrastructure and social support services to be integrated into the regular annual programs
11 and budgets of the DA-BWSM and other implementing agencies and instrumentalities, as
12 well as the local government units (LGUs), to ensure a sustained increased food productivity
13 as strategy to attain genuine rural development and promote water conservation.

14 **SEC. 4. *Small Scale Irrigation System Projects.*** – Small-scale irrigation system
15 projects, to be built and constructed pursuant to this Act, shall include the following:

- 16 1) **Pump Irrigation System from Open Sources (PISOS)** – a pump used to lift water
17 from river, stream or marsh to the main canal for the distribution of service area.
- 18 2) **Rainwater Harvesting System** – composed of three subsystems: collection, storage
19 and distribution which aim to store water in containers above or below ground and for
20 groundwater recharge.
- 21 3) **Small Diversion Dam (SDD)** – a concrete or rock fill structure constructed across a
22 channel or river with continuous flow to raise the water level allows diversion of
23 water by gravity from the source to the point of use.

1 4) **Shallow Tube Well** – is a tube or pipe vertically set into the ground, usually at depths
2 of between twenty (20) to sixty (60) feet, for the purpose of suction lifting of water
3 from shallow aquifers. It consists of one or more fully developed shallow tube well
4 equipped with appropriate pumping units that can serve a contiguous area owned by
5 an individual.

6 5) **Small Water Impounding Projects (SWIPs)** – a structure constructed across a
7 narrow diversion or valley to hold back water and develop a reservoir that will store
8 rainfall and runoff during the rainy season for immediate or future use.

9 6) **Small Farm Reservoir (SFR)** – a small water impounding dam structure to collect
10 rainfall and run-off designed for use in a single farm and typically has an area of
11 about three hundred (300) to two thousand square meters (2,000 sq. m.), with an
12 embankment height above ground level of less than four meters (4.0m). It can easily
13 be constructed manual digging or through a bulldozer. Irrigation is done with the use
14 of a PVC siphon pipes or pumps.

15 **SEC. 5. Accelerated Irrigation Development** – The DA-BWSM shall observe the
16 following priorities and guidelines in the identification, planning, construction, and
17 management of small-scale irrigation system projects:

18 a) Conduct an inventory of the existing small scale irrigation systems to avoid project
19 duplication or overlapping and minimize unnecessary pre-construction expenses,
20 including their efficiency status update, impact analysis, and the actual total potential
21 areas for irrigation to be completed not beyond six (6) months from the effectivity of
22 this Act;

- b) List priority proposed sites for small scale irrigation systems projects and programs per province per region to support the objectives of the Food Staples Sufficiency Program (FSSP) under the DA
- c) Implement a program for a rainwater-sensitive design for the roof of all buildings. All medium to large scale commercial and industrial establishments such as but not limited to shopping malls, supermarkets, and hotels, shall have rainwater storage facilities commensurate with the size of roof area. Residential areas, which exceed an area of 300 square meters, shall create rainwater harvesting facility and compulsorily adopt good rainwater harvesting practices. In rural areas, all barangays shall construct rainwater harvesting facilities;
- d) Optimize productivity in upland areas of the country by carrying out small-scale irrigation projects with the management thereof turned over to the farmer beneficiaries thru their Irrigators' Associations (IAS) or Farmers Cooperatives upon project completion and after undertaking institutional development training. Provided, that amortization of the direct cost of these projects shall follow the existing policies on cost recovery mechanisms for communal irrigation systems;
- e) Draw up a work program that is realistic, achievable and annually target-specific to agricultural yield in the identified areas within the ten year period. The type of project and development scheme shall be determined based on technical feasibility studies to be conducted by DA-BWSM;
- f) To realize the full benefits of sustained increased productivity from these small scale irrigation system projects, other agricultural support services shall be provided and institutionalized within the third year of operation under this Act. DA-BSWM shall assist the IAS and facilitate coordination with the DA, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and such other agencies and the LGUs in the provision of other

1 agricultural support inputs and infrastructures such as, but not limited to, access to
2 agricultural credit, high-quality seeds, technical assistance on pest management and
3 fertilizer use, post-harvest facilities, and marketing. Funds for these shall be included
4 in the estimates of project costs.

5 **SEC. 6. *Irrigators Associations*** – The DA - BSWM, in coordination with NIA, shall
6 continue to organize, develop and strengthen farmer-beneficiaries under this Act into self-
7 sustaining Irrigators' Associations or farmer cooperatives.

8 **SEC. 7. *Irrigation of Other Crops*** – Irrigation projects under this Act are not limited
9 to rice/palay production in order to maximize use of irrigated lands.

10 **SEC. 8. *Special Accelerated Irrigation Fund*** – The sum of One Billion Pesos
11 (P1,000,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the initial implementation of this Act, which
12 shall be incorporated in the Annual Budget of the DA-BSWM. Thereafter, a Special
13 Irrigation Fund shall be established by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in
14 the Annual General Appropriations Act for the continuous implementation of this Act in the
15 Annual Budget of the DA-BSWM until its tenth (10th) year completion date, with provision
16 for accelerated release in the first three (3) years to meet intensive small scale irrigation
17 system program costs.

18 **SEC. 9. *Contracts*** – The DA-BSWM shall comply with the bidding regulations
19 under Republic Act No. 9184, as amended, which allows community participation for small-
20 scale irrigation system projects to promote IA capability building. However, pursuant to the
21 declared policy and in the interest of the public, and to facilitate procurement of smaller
22 contracts, DA-BSWM may enter into contracts using the Simplified Bidding procedures, as
23 provided under AFMA, for the 10-year period of implementation of this Act.

1 **SEC. 10. *List of Priority Projects.*** – The NIA shall annex a list of priority projects
2 proposed to be funded under this Act: Provided, that upon completion of the inventory of
3 existing irrigation systems and the identification/listing of potential small scale irrigation
4 system projects, the revised list of projects to be funded shall be finalized and approved.

5 **SEC. 11. *Exemption from Election Ban.*** – The implementation of the small scale
6 irrigation system development program which involves the emergency construction,
7 rehabilitation, repair and installation of irrigation facilities, including infrastructure
8 complementary support services, shall be exempt from the scope of the election ban on public
9 works.

10 **SEC. 12. *Complementary Irrigation Component Projects.*** – Whenever practicable,
11 projects qualified under this Act shall include other irrigation-related components such as, but
12 not limited to, the following complementary development purposes:

- 13 a) watershed management and reforestation;
- 14 b) climate change vulnerability/flood prevention/erosion control;
- 15 c) fish culture;
- 16 d) power generation; and
- 17 e) tourism development.

18 **SEC. 13. *Oversight Committee.*** – A joint Oversight Committee composed of five (5)
19 members each in the House of Representatives and Senate, respectively, preferably coming
20 from the Committees on Rural Development and Agriculture shall be created to monitor the
21 strict implementation of this Act and the exercise of the authority granted hereunder.

22 **SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*** – Within 60 days upon
23 effectivity of this Act, the DA-BSWM, through the Secretary of the DA, shall initiate the

1 convening of a Technical Working Group to promulgate the IRR of this Act with relevant
2 stakeholders.

3 **SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.*** – If any of the provisions of this Act is declared invalid
4 or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall remain
5 in full force and effect.

6 **SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations,
7 rules and regulations, and issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this
8 Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

9 **SEC. 17. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
10 publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

11 *Approved,*