



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



SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 8707

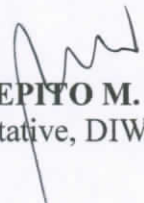
Introduced by **DIWA Party-list Representative Pepito M. Pico**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mulberry is a plant with a wide variety of uses, from its delicious fruit, which is also being studied for medicinal purposes relating to diabetes and Alzheimer's disease); to its leaves, which are nutritious feed for a variety of animals, particularly for silkworms. The plant can grow in temperate and warm climate and at a broad spectrum of elevations. The plant requires very little maintenance, fertilization, or irrigation. As such, mulberry makes for an excellent economic resource.

Unfortunately, in the Philippines, the mulberry is a vastly untapped resource. Mulberry production and its beneficial consequences have not been given much attention. Currently, there are two programs, both in silk production, that have a focus on mulberry: (1) the Sericulture Research and Development Institute at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (DMMSU) in La Union; and (2) the Bago City, Negros Occidental Silk Production Project of OISCA and the Province of Negros. For the country to better realize the potential of mulberry production, and in order to become more competitive in its agriculture sector-- as well as introducing a good potential income source for our small holder farmers -- the benefits of mulberry and mulberry production must be promoted.

This bill -- a refiling of House Bill 4176 filed by former DIWA Party-list Representative Emmeline Villar and a counterpart of Senate Bill No. 323 with the support of its author, Senator Cynthia Villar -- aims to promote the benefits of mulberry and to develop the production thereof through the creation of Philippine Mulberry Industry Development Program, and the National Inter-agency Mulberry Council.


PEPITO M. PICO
Representative, DIWA Party-list



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL MULBERRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. This, Act shall be known as the "National Mulberry Development Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to ensure the general welfare of its people towards achieving better health and nutrition, higher levels of rural income, promote environmental protection and enhance the general well-being of the rural farming families, through the production and promotion of the mulberry as an industry.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For this purpose, the following terms shall refer to:

- a) *Program* - the Philippine Mulberry Development Program designed to promote the Mulberry Industry in the country.
- b) *Council* - the National Inter-agency Mulberry Council established under this Act.
- c) *Secretariat* - the Secretariat established to provide assistance to the council under this Act.

SEC. 4. Institutionalizing the Philippine Mulberry Industry Development Program - There is hereby established and institutionalized the Philippine Mulberry Industry Development Program under the High Value Crops Development Act or RA. No. 7900.

SEC. 5. Objectives of the Philippine Mulberry Development Program (PMDP) - The PMDP aims to make the Philippine Mulberry Industry competitive in the local and global markets while establishing community based enterprises and providing opportunities for local employment and for the people to avail of its medicinal benefits.

SEC. 6. Creation of the National Mulberry Inter-agency Council. There is hereby created a convergence, policy-making and directing body called the National Inter-agency Mulberry Council, which shall have the general powers and attributes given under the Department of Agriculture, High Value Crops Development Program.

SEC. 7. Members of the National Mulberry Inter-agency Council. The Council shall be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Undersecretary for Crops as Vice Chair, with the following as members:

- (a) The Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform or their designated representative;
- (b) The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry or their designated representative;
- (c) The Secretary of the Department of the interior and Local Government or their designated representative;
- (d) The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology or their designated representative;
- (e) The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or their designated representative;
- (f) Three (3) representative from mulberry farmers, processors and marketing service providers.

To provide continuity, the designated representative of the Cabinet Secretaries shall be named and shall be their regular representative in the Council in case they are absent.

SEC. 8. Powers and Functions of the Council. The powers and functions of the Council shall include the following:

- a) Update scientific research and development for the mulberry industry to enhanced production efficiency for its optimum economic advantage;
- b) Promote the propagation of the mulberry trees on suitable land and locations nationwide;
- c) Improve the small holder farmers' performance to reduce cost in the production, processing and promotion of mulberry trees and fruits, in accordance with good agricultural practices;
- d) Ensure the development and availability of locally manufactures machines for the efficient and cost effective processing of the mulberry products;
- e) Facilitate the establishment of a shared facility program for the development for the industry players' enterprise;
- f) Promote the establishment of a credit and/or financing scheme for mulberry industry players to include marginal farmers, cooperatives, and associations;
- g) Ensure the markets for mulberry products locally and internationally;

- h) Annually review and submit a report to the COCAFM on the mulberry development performance;

SEC. 9. Meetings and Quorum. The Council, shall meet regularly at least once every quarter on a date to be determined by the Chair with prior notice. The Chair on his or her own may convene special meetings to discuss urgent matters needing immediate resolution and actions. To constitute a quorum and arrive to a decision, there should be at least five (5) members of the council present.

SEC. 10. Secretariat and Support Staff - The High Value Crops Unit of the DA shall appoint, from among its personnel, an in-charge to manage and who perform the direct the day-to-day operations of the council.

SEC. 11. Cooperation with other Government Agencies and Private Business Organizations - All units and agencies of the government shall support and cooperate with the National Inter-agency Mulberry Council in the implementation of its functions and programs.

SEC. 12. Funding - On the year following the approval of this Act, there shall be a provision annually in the General Appropriations Act under the Department of Agriculture, High Value Crops Development Program an additional the amount of Fifty Million (P50,000,000.00) Pesos for the implementation of the objectives of the Mulberry Development Act of 2016.

SEC. 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - A committee, composed of representatives from the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Agrarian Reform, the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government and one (1) each from the small farmers and commercial producers sectors to be designated by the Secretary of Agriculture, shall formulate and prescribe, after public hearing and publication as required by law, the implementing rules and regulations in order to carry out the provisions of this Act. The representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry shall be the chairman and the vice-chairman, of the committee.

SEC. 14. Repealing Clause. - All laws or parts thereof, decrees, orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. Separability Clause - If any of the provisions of this Act is declared invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect immediately following its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation

Approved,