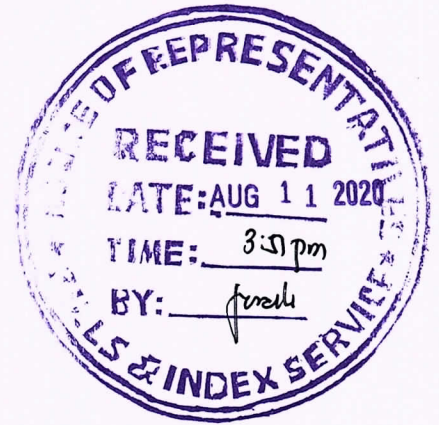




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7353



Introduced by MAGSASAKA Party-List Representative
ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has crystallized the systematic and structural problems of agriculture in the country. With the impending global food emergency, the government must align its policies towards food sovereignty to secure the food value chain, boost agricultural productivity, and uplift the lives of our food front liners, primarily farmers.

In line with the objective of increased productivity, the government shall provide adequate support services to increase farm yield. One strategy in achieving this goal is to reconcile the issues and expand the scope of the irrigation services of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) through the significant participation and adequate representation of small farmers in the decision-making process. This is in line with Republic Act No. 7607, the Magna Carta for Small Farmers, declaring that the State shall recognize the right of small farmers and farmworkers, cooperatives and independent farmers' organizations to participate in the planning, organization, management, and implementation of agricultural programs and projects, especially through the bayanihan spirit.

This bill seeks to amend the NIA Charter by rationalizing the per diem of the Board members to adapt to the changing economic conditions and make the Agriculture Secretary, as the chief implementer of agriculture programs of the country, the Chairman of the NIA Board. Furthermore, this bill aims to ensure substantial representation through the inclusion of three representatives in the NIA Board from genuine small farmers organizations across the country, regardless of the crop classification they produce.

Representatives Juan Edgardo Angara and Maximo Rodriguez Jr. filed the same bill in previous Congresses, while a similar one is filed by Rep. Rufus Rodriguez in the 18th Congress.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

REP. ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT



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HOUSE BILL NO. 7353

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THREE SMALL FARMERS' REPRESENTATIVES IN THE NATIONAL
IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION (NIA) BOARD, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
SECTION 4 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 3601, entitled, "Act Creating the National
2 Irrigation Administration," as amended by Presidential Decree No. 552 and further
3 amended by Executive Order No.292, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

4 "SEC. 4. *Board of Directors.* The powers and functions of the National
5 Irrigation Administration shall be exercised by a Board of Directors composed of
6 [six (6)] **EIGHT (8)** members, to wit: The Secretary of [Public Works,
7 Transportation and Communications] **AGRICULTURE**, who shall be the Chairman,
8 the Administrator of the National Irrigation Administration, who shall be the Vice-
9 Chairman, the Director-General of the National Economic and Development
10 Authority, the Secretary of [Agriculture] **PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS**, the
11 General Manager of the National Power Corporation, and [one (1) member]
12 **THREE (3) MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE SMALL FARMERS OF LUZON,**
13 **VISAYAS, AND MINDANAO, RESPECTIVELY**, who shall be appointed by the
14 President of the Philippines on **THE** recommendation/**S** of [any national rice and

corn] **ACCREDITED SMALL FARMER** organization/**S** of good standing and who shall serve for a term of four years unless sooner removed.

In the case of failure of a member to attend meetings of the Board due to physical incapacity or any temporary disability, the Undersecretary or the Assistant Head of the office or agency to which the member concerned belongs, shall attend the meetings of the board, with the power to vote.

For actual attendance at regular meetings, each member of the Board or his representative as authorized in the preceding paragraph, shall receive a per diem [of three hundred pesos, and one hundred pesos for special meetings, but the total amount of per diem that a member may receive in a month shall in no case exceed one thousand five hundred pesos.] **AS DETERMINED UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 24, S. 2011, "PRESCRIBING RULES TO GOVERN THE COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS/TRUSTEES IN GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR -CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS INCLUDING GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS"**. [The Board shall fix the amount of representation and transportation allowances that the members may receive.]"

SEC. 2. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The National Irrigation Administration (NIA), in consultation with concerned government agencies, farmers, farmer cooperatives, irrigators associations, and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 3. Appropriations. - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 4. Separability Clause. - If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 5. Repealing Clause. - Republic Act No. 3601, as amended by Presidential Decree No. 552 and Executive Order No. 292, is hereby amended insofar as it is inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

All other laws, decrees, executive orders, regulations, or issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,