

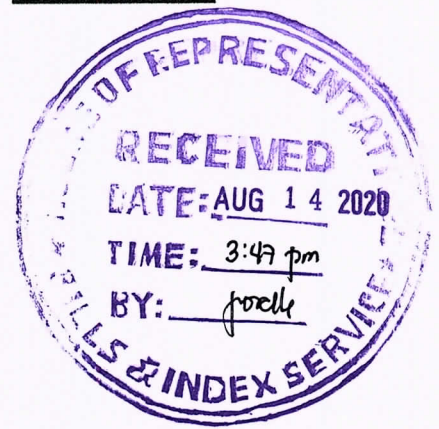


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7390

E-FILED



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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Around 40% of our country's total land area is devoted and suitable for the cultivation of the soil, planting of crops, growing of trees, fish and aquaculture production, raising of livestock, and poultry. However, the lack of technical experts on the grassroots level hampered the implementation of national policies and programs that could have maximized the utilization of these resources. This dilemma resulted in a massive income loss of farmers and fishers, decreased agricultural productivity, and market incompetence.

According to the declaration of policy under the Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, the territorial and political subdivisions of the State shall enjoy genuine and meaningful local autonomy and make them more effective partners in the attainment of national goals. In line with the principle of industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform as enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, it is imperative to empower local government units to effectively advance the interests and welfare of our farmers and fisherfolk.

This bill seeks to make the position of Municipal Agriculturist mandatory to all municipalities in the country. This objective is reflected in the bills filed by Reps. Alfredo Garbin, Jr., Elizaldy Co, and Nestor Fongwan, which goes back to the 15th Congress when Rep. Czarina Umali first filed it.

The current measure of making the position optional is outdated and inconsistent with the objective of empowering LGUs to ensure that local concerns on agriculture will be given attention by providing expertise and technical skills.

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

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ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT



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AN ACT
MAKING THE POSITION OF MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURIST MANDATORY IN
MUNICIPALITIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 443 AND 482 (a) OF
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7610, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CODE OF 1991"

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 443 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as "Local
2 Government Code of 1991", is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 "SEC. 443. *Officials of the Municipal Government.* – (a) There shall be in each
4 municipality a municipal mayor, a municipal vice-mayor, sangguniang bayan
5 members, a secretary to the sangguniang bayan, a municipal treasurer, a
6 municipal assessor, a municipal accountant, a municipal budget officer, a
7 municipal planning and development coordinator, a municipal engineer/building
8 official, a municipal health officer, [and] a municipal civil registrar, **AND A**
9 **MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURIST.**

10 "(b) In addition thereto, the mayor may appoint a municipal administrator, a
11 municipal legal officer, [a municipal agriculturist,] a municipal environment and
12 natural resources officer, a municipal social welfare and development officer, a
13 municipal architect, and a municipal information officer."

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SEC. 2. Section 482 (a) of Republic Act No. 7160, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 482. *Qualifications, Powers, and Duties.* – (a) No person shall be appointed agriculturist unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree in agriculture or any related course from a recognized college or university, and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have practiced his profession in agriculture or acquired experience in a related field for at least five (5) years in the case of the provincial and city agriculturist, and three (3) years in the case of the municipal agriculturist. The position of the agriculturist shall be mandatory for the provincial **AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS** and optional for the city [and municipal] government[s].”

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SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Department of Agriculture (DA), in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of concerned Local Government Units (LGUs).

SEC. 5. *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. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, regulations, or issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,