

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9639



Introduced by Representative Mercedes “Didi” C. Cagas

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A PROVINCIAL FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES
TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, AND PRODUCT CENTER IN THE PROVINCE OF
DAVAO DEL SUR, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Touted as having the longest shoreline in Region XI stretching along its eleven municipalities, Davao Del Sur is endowed with an abundance of coastal natural resources and its residents has long depended on its fisheries, coral reefs, mangroves, beaches, coastal bays, and estuaries for aquaculture and other uses. The Philippine Statistics Authority Fisheries Situationer Report for the first quarter of 2019 stated that the Province of Davao Del Sur has shown substantial contribution in the production of aquaculture at 68.51 percent of the recorded total of 7,956.33 metric tons.

Unfortunately, the coastal resource base is being depleted due to a variety of reasons including destructive fishing methods, damaged or converted shoreline habitats, upland agriculture pollutants, among others. The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected key activities in the fisheries or aquaculture supply chain, disrupted by impacts arising from Covid-19 and other related government measures. Aside from environmental concerns, job and food security will be most affected by the continued depletion of marine resources.

This representation believes that the establishment of the Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center in the Province of Davao Del Sur will not only provide interventions and promote inclusive growth in the fisheries and aquaculture sector but also recognizes the need to uplift the plight of the fisherfolk in the Province. Likewise, the establishment of the Center adheres to the objectives of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8435) which aims to modernize the fisheries sector to enhance profitability and prepare the same to address the challenges of globalization.

It is for the foregoing reason that the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MERCEDES “DIDI” C. CAGAS

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established, under the supervision of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture (BFAR-DA), a Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center in the Province of Davao Del Sur.

The BFAR shall collaborate with, and tap the expertise, resources and facilities of, the Davao Del Sur State College (DSSC) in the establishment, management and operation of these centers.

SEC. 2. The Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center shall, at a minimum, provide onsite and online access to the following:

- (a) Applied technology for innovative and sustainable fish breeding and hatchery of high-value marine species;
- (b) Training activities and technical assistance to provide sustainable development and production support and education to fisherfolk;
- (c) Technical assistance for sustainable production and environmentally sound post-harvest development services;
- (d) Technical assistance in the establishment, operation, enhancement and maintenance of government-operated marine sanctuaries, seaweed nurseries, seaweed processing plants, and mariculture park facilities;
- (e) Catalog, display, and promote local fisheries and aquatic products, and provide marketing and product distribution assistance to fisherfolk; and

- (f) Database of available insurance and credit assistance for fisherfolk, and local and international grants and scholarships for fisheries and aquatic resources studies and research.

SEC. 3. The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's programs the establishment of the Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary to support the operations of the Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center shall be set aside by the local government unit from any available local revenue.

SEC. 4. The Department of Agriculture, through the BFAR, shall issue rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,