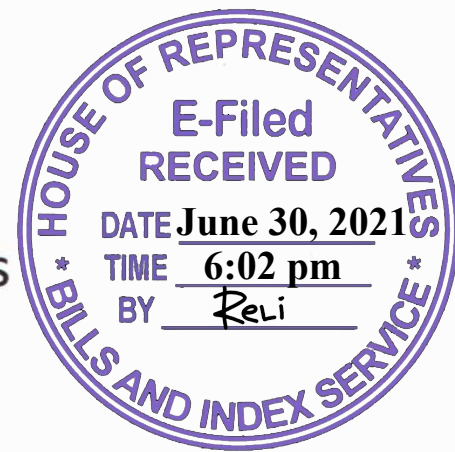




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Eighteenth Congress
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9696



Introduced by Representative Frederick W. Siao

EXPLANATORY NOTE

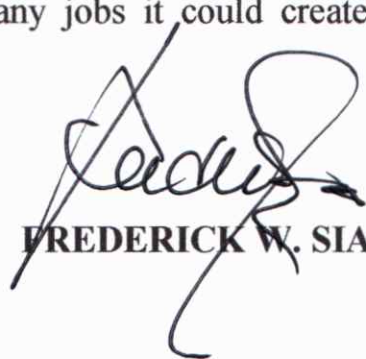
This bill seeks to establish a special economic zone located in the National Steel Corporation Site in Iligan City, Province of Lanao del Norte.

The land formerly occupied by the National Steel Corporation (NSC) located in Barangays Suarez, Tomas Cabili, Sta. Elena and Maria Cristina, Iligan City remains as one of the most expensive prime lots in the area. Sitting at 430 hectares or approximately 1,062.55 acres, the National Steel Corporation was originally operated by the National Shipyard and Steel Corporation before it changed ownership several times until its acquisition by the local government of Iligan City. Unfortunately, the property and remaining facilities that once housed a bustling steel industry in the former industrial city of the south are now desperate for redevelopment and reconstruction.

Paragraph (d), Section 5 of Republic Act (RA) No. 7916, otherwise known as the "*Special Economic Zone Act of 1995*," clearly states that Iligan should and must have an ecozone. The vast NSC properties remain untapped to this day and the government could make the NSC properties attractive to foreign investors with the potential to create thousands of jobs and income not only for the people of Iligan City but for the whole of Lanao del Norte as well.

This bill seeks to fulfill the mandate of RA 7916. As a special economic zone, the property shall be under the supervision of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and managed and operated by the NSC Special Economic Zone Authority.

Given the huge potential of the area as a self-sustaining industrial, commercial, agro-industrial, tourist, banking, financial, and investment center with suitable residential areas and the many jobs it could create, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



FREDERICK W. SIAO



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HOUSE BILL NO. 9696

Introduced by Representative Frederick W. Siao

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE ILIGAN CITY,
PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE TO BE KNOWN AS THE “NSC
SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE,” AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. **Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “NSC Special Economic Zone Act.”

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is a declared policy of the State to actively encourage, promote, induce, and accelerate a sound and balanced industrial, economic, and social development of the country through measures that attract legitimate and productive foreign investments. Towards this end, the state shall undertake the establishment of special economic zones in suitable and strategic locations in the country to provide jobs to the people especially those in rural areas, increase their productivity and income, and improve the level and quality of their living conditions.

1 SEC. 3. ***NSC Special Economic Zone.*** – There is hereby established a
2 special economic zone to be located at the National Steel Corporation (NSC)
3 site in Iligan City, Province of Lanao del Norte, to be known as the “*NSC*
4 *Special Economic Zone*,” hereinafter referred to as the NSC Ecozone. The
5 specific metes and bounds of the NSC Ecozone shall be more particularly
6 defined in a presidential proclamation that shall be issued for this purpose.

7 SEC. 4. ***Governing Principles.*** – The NSC Special Economic Zone shall
8 be managed and operated under the following principles:

9 (a) Within the framework and limitations of the 1987 Philippine
10 Constitution and applicable provisions of the Local Government Code, the NSC
11 Ecozone shall be developed into and operated as a decentralized, self-reliant,
12 and self-sustaining industrial, commercial, agro-industrial, tourist, banking,
13 financial, and investment center with suitable residential areas;

14 (b) The NSC Ecozone may establish mutually beneficial economic
15 relations with other entities or enterprises within the country subject to the
16 administrative guidance of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the
17 Department of Trade and Industry with foreign entities or enterprises;

18 (c) Foreign citizens and companies owned by non-Filipinos in
19 whatever proportion may set up enterprises in the NSC Ecozone, either by
20 themselves or in a joint venture or partnership with Filipinos in any sector of
21 industry, international trade, and commerce within the NSC Ecozone;

1 (d) The NSC Ecozone shall be managed and operated as a separate
2 customs territory to ensure and facilitate the free flow, entry, and movement of
3 machinery and other goods. However, exportation or removal of goods, articles,
4 and capital from the zone to other parts of the Philippine territory shall be
5 subject to customs duties and taxes under the Customs and Tariff Code and
6 other relevant tax laws of the Philippines. It shall be vested with the authority to
7 issue certificates of origin for products manufactured or processed within the
8 NSC Ecozone in accordance with prevailing rules of origin, and the pertinent
9 regulations of the duly recognized national bodies tasked to oversee all other
10 ecozones in the country;

11 (e) Duty-free shops shall be located only within the NSC Ecozone;

12 (f) Business establishments operating within the NSC Ecozone are
13 entitled to the existing fiscal incentives as provided for under Presidential
14 Decree No. 66, the law creating the Export Processing Zone Authority, or those
15 provided under Book VI of Executive Order No. 226, otherwise known as the
16 *"Omnibus Investment Code of 1987,"* and such incentives, benefits or privileges
17 presently enjoyed by business establishments operating within the Subic Special
18 Economic Zone under Republic Act No. 7227, otherwise known as the *"Bases*
19 *Conversion and Development Act of 1992"*;

20 (g) Any provision of existing laws, rules or regulations to the contrary
21 notwithstanding, no taxes, local and national, including final withholding taxes
22 on dividends to the parent company and branch profit remittances to the head

1 office of a business establishment, shall be imposed on business establishments
2 operating within the NSC Ecozone. In lieu of all local and national taxes, said
3 business establishments shall pay to the National Government a final tax of
4 eight per centum (8%) of their net taxable income as determined in accordance
5 with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code, as amended, to be
6 divided as follows:

7 (1) Three per centum (3%) shall accrue to the National
8 Government;

9 (2) Two per centum (2%) to Iligan City;

10 (3) One per centum (1%) to be shared by the barangays affected
11 by the declaration of the NSC Ecozone in proportion to their income from
12 business activities within the NSC Ecozone; and

13 (4) Two per centum (2%) to the NSC Special Economic Zone
14 Authority which shall be created under this Act: *Provided*, That the final
15 tax of eight per centum (8%) of net income may be increased by the
16 President of the Philippines after ten (10) years from the effectivity of this
17 Act upon the recommendation of the Secretaries of Finance, and Trade
18 and Industry, the Chairperson of the National Economic Development
19 Authority and the administrator of the NSC Special Economic Zone
20 Authority: *Provided, further*, That in no case shall the final tax to be
21 imposed exceed fifteen per centum (15%) of net income.

1 In case of conflict between local and national tax laws on the one hand,
2 and the tax incentives herein granted on the other, the same shall be resolved in
3 favor of the grant of incentives.

4 (h) Except as otherwise provided herein, the local government units
5 embraced within the NSC Ecozone shall retain and maintain their basic
6 autonomy and identity. Iligan City shall operate and function in accordance with
7 Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "*Local Government Code of*
8 *1991*";

9 (i) Any foreign investor who establishes a business enterprise within
10 the NSC Ecozone and who maintains a capital investment of not less than One
11 Hundred Fifty Thousand United States Dollars (US\$150,000.00) shall be
12 granted, along with the foreign investor's spouse, dependents, and unmarried
13 children below twenty-one (21) years of age, a permanent resident status within
14 the NSC Ecozone;

15 Such foreign investor's spouse, dependents, and unmarried children
16 below twenty-one (21) years of age, shall have freedom of ingress and egress in
17 the NSC Ecozone without any need of any special authorization from the
18 Bureau of Immigration.

19 Likewise, the NSC Special Economic Zone Authority shall issue working
20 visas renewable every two (2) years to foreign executives and foreign
21 technicians with highly specialized skills which no Filipino possesses, as
22 certified by the Department of Labor and Employment.

1 The names of the foreigners granted permanent resident status and
2 working visas by the NSC Special Economic Zone Authority shall be reported
3 to the Bureau of Immigration within thirty (30) days from such grant.

4 The foregoing is without prejudice to a foreigner acquiring permanent
5 resident status in the Philippines in accordance with applicable immigration,
6 retirement, and other related laws.

7 (j) The provisions of any law to the contrary notwithstanding, any
8 foreigner, partnership, corporation, or any other business association not created
9 and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, engaged in the
10 business of retailing goods and merchandise, shall be permitted to engage in
11 such retail trade within the NSC Ecozone after securing a license for that
12 purpose from the NSC Special Economic Zone Authority: *Provided*, That only
13 foreign nationals engaged in medium and large-scale retail trade may be
14 permitted to engage in such business within the NSC Ecozone. The
15 determination of the medium and large-scale retail trade operation shall be the
16 responsibility of the NSC Special Economic Zone Authority; and

17 (k) Existing banking laws and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) rules
18 and regulations shall apply on foreign exchange and other current account trade
19 and non-trade transactions, local and foreign borrowings, foreign investments,
20 establishment and operation of local and foreign banks, foreign currency deposit
21 units, offshore banking units, and other financial institutions under the
22 supervision of the BSP: *Provided, however*, That the NSC Special Economic

Zone Authority may, in coordination with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of Trade and Industry, adopt more liberal rules to attract offshore banking, financial services, trust, or trading institutions to operate in the zone: *Provided, further,* That such rules if adopted shall apply only to offshore banking, finance, financial services, trust, or trading institutions operating within the NSC Ecozone.

SEC. 5. ***NSC Special Economic Zone Authority.*** – Subject to the concurrence of the local government units that will be affected by the creation of the NSC ecozone, there is hereby created a body corporate to be known as the “*NSC Special Economic Zone Authority,*” hereinafter referred to as the Authority, which shall manage and operate the NSC Ecozone under this Act. It shall be organized within one hundred eighty (180) days after the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. ***Principal Office.*** – The Authority shall maintain its principal office in Iligan City, Province of Lanao Del Norte but it may establish branches within the Philippines and abroad as may be necessary for the proper conduct of its business.

SEC. 7. ***Powers and Functions of the Authority.*** – The Authority shall have the following functions:

(a) Operate, administer, and manage the NSC Ecozone according to the principles and provisions set forth in this Act;

1 (b) Recommend to the President the issuance of a proclamation to fix
2 and delimit the site of the NSC Ecozone;

3 (c) Register, regulate, and supervise the enterprises in the NSC
4 Ecozone in an efficient and decentralized manner;

5 (d) Regulate and undertake the establishment, operation, and
6 maintenance of utilities, other services and infrastructure in the NSC Ecozone
7 such as heat, light and power, water supply, telecommunications, transport, toll
8 roads and bridges, and fix just, reasonable and competitive rates, fares, charges
9 and prices therefor;

10 (e) Directly negotiate with and grant foreign or international airlines
11 and carriers entry permits and landing rights into the zone;

12 (f) Have sole, absolute, and exclusive authority to construct, acquire,
13 own, lease, assign, establish, operate, and maintain on its own or through others
14 by virtue of contracts, franchises, licenses, or permits under any of the schemes
15 allowed in Republic Act No. 6957, otherwise known as the "*Build-Operate*
16 *Transfer Law*," or in joint venture with the private sector without the necessity
17 of conducting public bidding thereon, any or all of the public utilities and
18 infrastructure required or needed in the NSC Ecozone, which include
19 transportation, construction of road networks, water and sewerage systems,
20 electric power, wireline and wireless telecommunications systems, networks,
21 facilities and services, in coordination with appropriate national and local
22 government authorities and in conformity with applicable laws thereon;

1 (g) To undertake all public infrastructure and utility projects within the
2 NSC Ecozone and as provided for in this Act and to contract foreign loans and
3 grants in accordance with existing laws;

4 (h) Operate on its own, either directly or through a subsidiary entity, or
5 license to other tourism related activities, including games, amusements, and
6 recreational and sports facilities to provide, in cooperation with the Department
7 of Tourism, incentives to tourism-related businesses operating within the NSC
8 Ecozone which include duty-free buying privileges for non-resident visitors;

9 (i) Within the limitation provided by law, to raise or borrow adequate
10 and necessary funds from local or foreign sources to finance its projects and
11 programs under this Act, and for that purpose to issue bonds, promissory notes,
12 and other forms of securities, and to secure the same by a guarantee, pledge,
13 mortgage, deed of trust, or an assignment of all or part of its property or assets;

14 (j) Provide security for the NSC Ecozone in coordination with the
15 national and local governments. For this purpose, the Authority may establish
16 and maintain its own security force and firefighting capability or hire others to
17 provide the same;

18 (k) Protect, preserve, maintain, and develop, among others, the virgin
19 forests, minerals and mineral deposits, including precious metals within the
20 NSC Ecozone. For this purpose, the rules and regulations of the Department of
21 Environment and Natural Resources and other government agencies involved in
22 the above functions shall be implemented by the NSC Ecozone, including the

1 issuance of environmental clearance certificates, patents and leasehold rights
2 over government lands and mining, drilling, and timber licenses;

3 (l) Acquire private real properties or rights thereon for infrastructure
4 and other development projects, secure rights-of-way which are needed for said
5 projects and the settlement of claims for payment, without further need of
6 conducting feasibility studies, information campaign, engineering surveys,
7 project cost estimates as required by existing laws and regulations pertinent
8 thereto;

9 (m) Charge reasonable fees for the provisions of services and the
10 maintenance of infrastructure and utilities;

11 (n) Impose fines and penalties for violations of the provisions of this
12 Act and the rules and regulations to be issued by the Authority;

13 (o) Phase the operationalization of the zone by delineating secured
14 areas within the zone: *Provided*, That privileges including tax and duty-free
15 retailing provided herein shall be accorded only to the secured areas: *Provided*,
16 *further*, That the Authority-registered enterprises located outside of the secured
17 areas may still enjoy the income tax incentives and duty-free importation
18 privileges herein granted but may not engage in tax and duty-free retailing:
19 *Provided, finally*, That in such secured area, the component local government
20 units may still exercise their taxing and revenue generating authority but only
21 insofar as persons or enterprises not registered with the Authority as zone
22 enterprises;

1 (p) Create, operate, or contract to operate such agencies and functional
2 units or offices of the Authority, as it may deem necessary;

3 (q) Adopt, alter, and use a corporate seal; make contracts, leases, own,
4 or otherwise dispose of personal or real property; sue and be sued; and
5 otherwise carry out its functions and duties as provided for in this Act; and

6 (r) Issue rules and regulations consistent with the provisions of this
7 Act as may be necessary to implement and accomplish the purposes, objectives,
8 and policies provided therein.

9 SEC. 8. *Non-Profit Character of the Authority.* – The Authority shall
10 be non-profit and shall devote the use of its returns from capital investments, as
11 well as excess revenues from its operations, for the development, improvement,
12 and maintenance and other related expenditures of the Authority to pay its
13 indebtedness and obligations and in furtherance and effective implementation of
14 the policy provided in this Act. In consonance thereto, the Authority is hereby
15 declared exempt from the payment of all taxes, duties, fees, imposts, charges,
16 costs, and service fees as well as any other costs and charges in any court or
17 administrative proceedings in which it may be a party.

18 The foregoing exemptions may however be entirely or partially lifted by
19 the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Secretary of
20 Finance, not earlier than five (5) years from the effectivity of this Act, if the
21 President finds the Authority to be self-sustaining and financially capable by
22 then to pay such taxes, customs duties, fees, and other charges after providing

1 for debt service requirements of the Authority and of its projected capital and
2 operating expenditures.

3 **SEC. 9. *Board of Directors; Composition; Tenure of the Authority.* –**

4 The powers of the Authority are vested in and exercised by a Board of
5 Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board. The Board is composed of the
6 following;

7 (a) The chairperson who is appointed by the President of the Republic
8 of the Philippines;

9 (b) The president and chief executive officer (CEO) who is appointed
10 by the Board and who is the vice chairperson of the Board;

11 (c) One representative from the domestic investors;

12 (d) One representative from the foreign investors;

13 (e) One representative from the workers working in the NSC Ecozone; and

14 (f) Two prominent citizens of the Philippines of whom one shall be a
15 resident of Iligan City, as members.

16 The chairperson and the members of the Board shall be appointed by the
17 President of the Philippines to serve for a term of six (6) years, unless sooner
18 separated from service due to death, voluntary resignation or removal for
19 cause. In case of death, resignation or removal for cause, the replacement shall
20 serve only the unexpired portion of the term. The president and CEO shall
21 serve for a term of three (3) years subject to reappointment by the Board.

1 Except for the representatives of the investors and labor sectors, no
2 person shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines as a member of
3 the Board unless the person is a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of
4 proven probity and integrity and a degree-holder in any of the following fields:
5 economics, business, public administration, law, management or their
6 equivalent, and with at least ten (10) years relevant working experience
7 preferably in the field of management or public administration.

8 The members of the Board are entitled to receive *per diem* at a rate to be
9 determined by the Department of Budget and Management in accordance with
10 existing rules and regulations: *Provided, however,* That the total per diem
11 collected each month shall not exceed the equivalent per diem for four (4)
12 meetings. Unless and until the President of the Philippines has fixed a higher
13 *per diem* for the members of the Board, such *per diem* shall not be more than
14 Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00) for every Board meeting.

15 SEC. 10. ***Powers and Duties of the Chairperson, President and CEO***
16 ***of the Authority.*** – The chairperson shall have the following powers and
17 duties:

- 18 (a) To exercise supervision over the affairs of the Authority;
- 19 (b) To preside over all the meetings of the Board;
- 20 (c) To spearhead the formulation of policies and procedures for the
21 Board and the Authority with the concurrence of the majority of its members;

1 (d) To direct the affairs of the Authority in accordance with the
2 policies of the Board through its president and CEO;

3 (e) To ensure that the goals and objectives set forth by the Board are
4 achieved and its policies implemented; and

5 (f) To lead the Board in carrying out the powers and functions of the
6 Authority as enumerated in Section 7 of this Act.

7 The president and CEO shall, among other powers and duties, execute,
8 carry out, and administer the policies, measures, orders and resolutions
9 approved by the Board; direct and supervise the day to day operation and
10 administration of the NSC Ecozone; and exercise such other powers and
11 perform such other functions or duties as may be directed to or assigned by law
12 or by the Board from time to time. Particularly, the president and CEO shall
13 exercise the following powers and duties:

14 (a) To serve as the vice chairperson of the Board and to assist the
15 chairperson and, in case of absence or incapacity of the chairperson: *Provided,*
16 *however,* That in case both are absent, the Board shall designate a temporary
17 chairperson from among its members;

18 (b) To sign and execute all contracts concluded by the Authority and
19 enter into all necessary obligations required or permitted by the charter upon
20 proper authorization by the Board; and sign all major documents, notes, and
21 checks for the NSC Ecozone;

1 (c) To exercise full discretion in the management of the affairs of the
2 Authority in accordance with law and in accordance with the provisions of this
3 Act and be accountable to the Board;

4 (d) To establish the internal organization of the Authority under such
5 conditions that the Board may prescribe;

6 (e) To submit an annual budget and necessary supplemental budget to
7 the Board for its approval;

8 (f) To submit within thirty (30) days after the close of each fiscal year
9 an annual report to the Board and such other reports as may be required;

10 (g) To submit to the Board for its approval policies, systems,
11 procedures, rules, and regulations that are essential to the operation of the NSC
12 Ecozone;

13 (h) To create a mechanism in coordination with relevant agencies for
14 the promotion of industrial peace, the protection of the environment and the
15 advancement of the quality of life in the NSC Ecozone; and

16 (i) To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board or
17 which are necessary or incidental to the office.

18 SEC. 11. ***Organization and Personnel.*** – The Board of Directors of the
19 Authority are entitled to organize its own personnel to assist the Board in the
20 exercise of its functions and to provide for an organization of the Authority
21 officers and employees. Upon recommendation of the president and CEO, the
22 Board shall appoint and fix the remunerations and other emoluments of its

1 officers and employees in accordance with existing laws on compensation and
2 position classification: *Provided*, That the Board shall have exclusive and final
3 authority to promote, transfer, assign, or reassign officers of the Authority, any
4 provision of existing law to the contrary notwithstanding: *Provided, further*,
5 That the president and CEO may carry out removal of such officers and
6 employees.

7 All positions in the Authority shall be governed by a compensation,
8 position, classification system, and qualification standards approved by the
9 chairperson with the concurrence of the Board based on a comprehensive job
10 analysis and audit of actual duties and responsibilities. The compensation plan
11 must be comparable with the prevailing compensation plans in the Subic Bay
12 Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), the Clark Development Corporation (CDC),
13 the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and the private
14 sector and subject to the periodic review by the Board no more than once every
15 two (2) years without prejudice to yearly merit reviews or increases based on
16 productivity and profitability. The Authority shall therefore be exempt from
17 existing laws, rules and regulations on compensation, position classification
18 and qualification standards. It shall, however, endeavor to make its systems
19 conform as closely as possible with the principles under Republic Act No.
20 6758, otherwise known as the "*Compensation and Position Classification Act*
21 *of 1989*," as amended.

1 The officers and employees of the Authority, including its appointive
2 members of the Board, shall not engage directly or indirectly in partisan
3 activities nor take part in any election, except to vote.

4 No officer or employee of the Authority, subject to civil service laws and
5 regulations, shall be removed or suspended except for cause, as provided by
6 law.

7 SEC. 12. ***Labor and Management Relations.*** – Except as otherwise
8 provided in this Act, labor and management relations in the NSC Ecozone shall
9 be governed by applicable rules and regulations under the Labor Code of the
10 Philippines, as amended. Employees and personnel in the registered enterprises
11 shall receive salaries and benefits and shall enjoy working conditions provided
12 under the Labor Code and other relevant laws and issuances of the Philippine
13 government and the DOLE. The Authority shall allow the visitorial power of
14 the Secretary of Labor and Employment or the duly authorized representative.

15 SEC. 13. ***IpsO Facto Clause.*** – Sections 30-41 of Republic Act No.
16 7916, otherwise known as the “*Special Economic Zone Act of 1995*,” as
17 amended by Republic Act No. 8748, shall *ipso facto* apply to the NSC
18 Ecozone.

19 SEC. 14. ***Capitalization.*** – The Authority shall have an authorized
20 capital stock of Two billion pesos (P2,000,000,000.00) no par shares with a
21 minimum issue of Ten pesos (P10.00) each, the majority shares of which shall
22 be subscribed and paid for by the National Government and the local

1 government units (LGUs) comprising the NSC Ecozone. The Board of
2 Directors of the Authority may, with the written concurrence of the Secretary
3 of Finance, sell shares, representing not more than forty per centum (40%) of
4 the capital stock of the Authority to the general public under such policy as the
5 Board and the Secretary of Finance may determine. The National Government
6 and the LGUs shall, in no case, own less than sixty per centum (60%) of the
7 total issued and outstanding capital of the Authority.

8 The amount necessary to subscribe and pay for the shares of the National
9 Government to the capital stock of the Authority shall be included in the
10 annual General Appropriations Act. For LGUs, the funds shall be taken from
11 their internal revenue allotment and other local funds.

12 SEC. 15. ***Supervision.*** – The NSC Ecozone shall be under the direct
13 control and supervision of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority for
14 purposes of policy direction and coordination.

15 SEC. 16. ***Relationship with the Regional Development Council.*** – The
16 Authority shall determine the development goals for the NSC Ecozone within
17 the framework of national development plans, policies and goals. The president
18 and CEO shall, upon approval by the Board, submit the plans, programs and
19 projects to the Regional Development Council for inclusion and inputs to the
20 overall regional development plan.

21 SEC. 17. ***Relationship with Local Government Units.*** – Except as
22 herein provided, the local government units comprising the NSC Ecozone shall

1 retain their basic autonomy and identity. In case of any conflict between the
2 Authority and Iligan City on matters affecting the NSC Ecozone other than
3 defense and security matters, the decision of the Authority prevails.

4 SEC. 18. ***Interpretation and Construction.*** – The powers, authorities
5 and functions that are vested in the Authority are intended to decentralize
6 governmental functions and authority and promote an efficient and effective
7 working relationship between the NSC Ecozone, the National Government, and
8 the local government units.

9 SEC. 19. ***Auditing.*** – The Commission on Audit shall appoint a
10 representative who shall be a full time auditor of the Authority and assign such
11 number of personnel as may be necessary to assist said representative in the
12 performance of official duties. The salaries and emoluments of the assigned
13 auditor and personnel shall be in accordance with pertinent laws, rules, and
14 regulations.

15 SEC. 20. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall be
16 held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected
17 shall remain in full force and effect.

18 SEC. 21. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, and issuances,
19 or any part thereof, which are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or
20 amended accordingly.

1 SEC. 22. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
2 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

3 Approved,