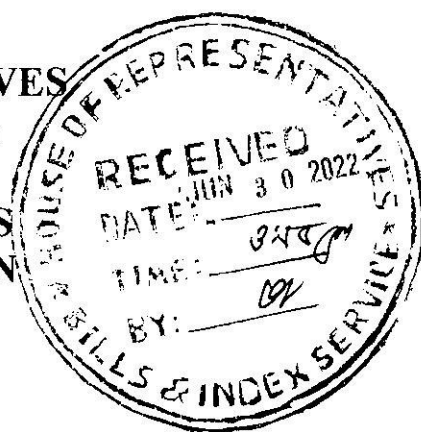


**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

House Bill No. 291



INTRODUCED BY Rep. GREG G. GASATAYA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Banago Wharf and Bredco Port are the entry points of naval vessels in Bacolod. With different shipping lines with access to Iloilo, Manila, and Cagayan de Oro such as 2GO, Travel, Weesam Express, Ocean Jet, Montenegro Lines, Jomalia Shipping, and Tri Star Megalink, it has become one of the busiest ports in the country vital to the transportation and economy of Bacolod City and the Province of Negros Occidental. At some point in time, there were also access routes to Puerto Princesa via Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro, General Santos, Zamboanga, Butuan via Cagayan de Oro, Cotabato, Dipolog, Iligan, Surigao via Cagayan de Oro, and Ozamiz. SuperFerry and Negros Navigation were relaunched as of 2012 into 2GO Travel routes from Bacolod to Metro Manila, Iloilo, and Cagayan de Oro.

With the ports of Bacolod providing for a cheaper alternative to travel and ship to and from Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro, and Metro Manila and serving as a strategic access point for other provinces, this representation believes that the aforementioned ports are greatly instrumental in the enhancement of investment and tourism opportunities in the city, the province, and its periphery. The promotion, optimal utilization, and enhancement of the ports through the establishment of an autonomous ports authority could be key to further development of trade and commerce and the economy. As one of the

top tourist spots in the country because of the world-renowned MassKara Festival, improvement and promotion of tourism infrastructures such as access points in Bacolod City could also translate to further economic progress, hence, progress in total welfare of all Bacolodnons. In order to achieve such, reforms in the structure and management of ports in Bacolod City would be necessary.

As such, approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.



REP. GREG G. GASATAYA
Lone District of Bacolod City

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House Bill No. 291

INTRODUCED BY Rep. GREG G. GASATAYA

AN ACT
CREATING THE BACOLOD CITY PORTS AUTHORITY,
DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING
APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Charter of the Bacolod City Ports Authority.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the establishment and growth of autonomous port bodies to produce an efficient and effective system of transport of goods and people consistent with the constitutional mandate to provide all sectors of the economy and all regions of the country optimum opportunity to develop.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, unless the context indicates otherwise, the terms herein shall be defined as follows:

- (a) “Port facility” shall include wharves, piers, slips, docks, bulkheads, basins, warehouses, cold storage, loading and unloading equipment, and passenger terminals and accessories;

- (b) "Transportation facility" includes passenger and cargo boats, ferry boats, tugs, barges, scows, harbor craft of any kind, and any other facility now in use or hereafter for use of the transportation or carriage of people or goods;
- (c) "Navigable waters" refers to all navigable portions of the seas, estuaries, and inland waterways;
- (d) "Wharf" means a continuous structure built parallel to or along the margin of the sea or alongside riverbanks, canals, or other waterways where vessels may lie alongside to receive and discharge cargo or passenger or lie at rest;
- (e) "Pier" includes any stage, stair, landing stage, jetty, floating barge or pontoon, and any bridge or other works relative thereto;
- (f) "Dock" includes locks, cuts, entrances, graving docks, inclined planes, slipways, quays, and other works relative thereto;
- (g) "Bulkhead" means any structure serving to divide land and water areas;
- (h) "Basin" refers to any naturally or artificially enclosed or nearly enclosed body of water in free communication with the sea;
- (i) "Warehouse" means any building for storage or shed for cargo;
- (j) "Lighter" means any large flat-bottomed boat or barge used in transporting goods, or in loading or unloading of vessels not lying alongside piers or wharves;
- (k) "Anchorage" means any place with sufficient depth of water where vessels anchor or may ride at anchor within the harbor;
- (l) "Goods" includes wares and merchandise of every description;

- (m) “Rates” includes tolls, fees, dues, and rent imposed by the Authority;
- (n) “Vehicle” includes any carriage traveling on its own wheels or runners and used or intended to be used for the conveyance or carrying of persons, animals, or goods; and
- (o) “Vessels” includes any ship, boat, or any waterborne craft used in the conveyance or carrying of persons, animals, or goods.

SECTION 4. *Creation of the Bacolod City Port Authority.* – There is hereby created a public-benefit corporation to be known as the Bacolod City Ports Authority, hereinafter referred to as the Authority. This Authority shall be under the supervision of the Department of Transportation for purposes of policy coordination.

SECTION 5. *Purposes and Objectives of the Commission.* – The Authority shall have the following purposes and objectives:

- (a) To integrate and coordinate the planning, development, construction, and operations of ports and port facilities within its territorial jurisdiction, consistent with the needs and requirements of the city;
- (b) To enhance the flow of international and domestic commerce passing through or utilizing the ports; and
- (c) To promote provincial development by providing support services to sustain the growth of export and other priority industries in the province.

SECTION 6. *Territorial Jurisdiction.* – The territorial jurisdiction of the Authority shall include all seas, lakes, rivers, and all other navigable inland waterways within the City of Bacolod, including waterways within the City of Bacolod.

SECTION 7. *Powers.* – The Authority shall have the power and responsibility to:

- (a) Have perpetual succession under its corporate name until otherwise provided by law;
- (b) Prescribe its bylaws and such rules and regulations as may be found necessary to promote or enhance the business of the Authority;
- (c) Adopt and use a seal;
- (d) Sue and be sued in any court;
- (e) Enter into contracts, transactions, and undertakings of whatever nature, which are necessary or incidental to its functions and objectives, with any natural or juridical persons, or with any other government institutions, domestic or foreign;
- (f) Acquire, own, hire, use, operate, and dispose of personal property and to acquire, own, use, lease, operate, and dispose of real property and interests thereon and to make improvements on such real property, including the reclamation, for port purposes, of foreshore and submerged lands within its territorial jurisdiction; which reclaimed land shall ipso facto be deemed transferred in the ownership to the Authority; and to enter into contracts with any public or private entity for such reclamation under such terms and conditions as it may deem to be for the public interest;
- (g) Purchase, hold, alienate, mortgage, pledge, or otherwise dispose of the shares of the capital stock of, or any bond, security or other evidences or indebtedness created by any other corporation or co-partnership of this or any other country, and while the owner of said stock, to exercise all the rights of ownership, including the right to vote thereon;
- (h) Exercise the right of eminent domain;
- (i) Exercise all other powers not contrary to law which may be necessary or incidental to the effectuation of its authorized purposes or to the

exercise of any of the foregoing powers, except the power to levy taxes assessments and, in general, to exercise in connection with property within its control all powers which may be exercised by a natural or juridical person over its property and affairs;

- (j) Levy dues and impose rates and charges for the use of the premises, works, appliances, facilities, or for services provided by or belonging to the Authority, or any other organization concerned with port operations;
- (k) Make expenditures in foreign countries to pay commissions and hire or contract experts and consultants, both foreign and local;
- (l) Make expenditures for promotion of business affairs in the Authority; and
- (m) Exercise all the powers of a corporation under the Corporation Law insofar as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Governing Body.* – The powers and functions of the Authority shall be vested in and exercised by a Bacolod City Port Commission composed of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and five (5) other Commissioners. The Chairman shall be the Secretary of the Department of Transportation or his duly designated undersecretary. The Vice-Chairman shall be the Bacolod City Port General Manager, who shall be elected by the Commissioners from among themselves.

The Commissioners shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines and shall represent the following sectors:

- (a) Shipowners and shipping operators;
- (b) Cargo-handling labor sector; and
- (c) Business sector.

SECTION 9. *Powers and Functions of the Commission.* – The powers and functions of the Bacolod City Port Commission shall be as follows:

- (a) To manage, administer, operate, maintain, improve, develop, and coordinate and otherwise govern the activities of all the ports within its territorial jurisdiction;
- (b) To investigate, prepare, adopt, implement, and execute a comprehensive and orderly plan for the overall development of all ports within its territorial jurisdiction, and to update such plans, as may be warranted from time to time;
- (c) To raise revenues for the Authority through fees, tolls, charges, rentals, and the like for the use of any property, equipment, or facility owned or controlled by it;
- (d) To raise and administer, together with such revenues as may by law accrue to the Authority, capital outlays by means of loans from any local or foreign financial institution to finance its projects;
- (e) To determine by survey and establish by engineering design the exact location, system, and character of any and all port facilities which it may own, construct, establish, effectuate, operate, or control;
- (f) To provide and maintain port facilities including accessory buildings and installations within its territorial jurisdiction on its own or through the private sector;
- (g) To prescribe and enforce rules and regulations on the use of wharves, piers, and anchorages by ships and other watercraft;
- (h) To determine the organization of the Authority and create such functional units therein as it may deem necessary in the proper and efficient implementation of the functions and purposes of the Authority, including the appointment of officials and employees, it

being understood that the security of tenure of these workers shall be respected consistent with existing laws;

- (i) To define the duties and fix the compensation and benefits of the General Manager, Deputy General Manager, Port Managers, and other officers of the Authority, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management;
- (j) To approve the annual budget of the Authority and/or such supplemental budgets thereof as may be submitted by the General Manager from time to time; and
- (k) To perform such other duties as may be necessary and convenient for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of the Authority;

SECTION 10. *Term of Office.* – The members of the Bacolod City Port Commission shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years: Provided, that any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired term of the Commissioner whom he succeeds.

SECTION 11. *Quorum, Per Diems, and Allowances.* – Four (4) members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Unless otherwise fixed by the Commission, the Chairman and all the members shall each receive a per diem of five thousand pesos (P5,000), exclusive of traveling expenses, for each day of meeting of the Commission, which shall not exceed four (4) meetings per month.

SECTION 12. *General Manager.* – The management of the day-to-day business and operations of the Authority shall be under the direction and control of the General Manager. He shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) To manage, direct, and supervise the operations and internal administration of the Authority, subject to the control and supervision of the Commission;

- (b) To prepare all memoranda pertaining to each and every item in the agenda for the meetings of the Commission and to submit for the consideration thereof such proposals or recommendations which he believes to be necessary to carry out effectively and beneficially the business of the Authority;
- (c) To implement the policies and administer the measures approved by the Commission;
- (d) To devise the executive organization pattern of the Authority, submit from time to time to the Commission the corresponding organizational and functional charts, and enforce the executive elements thereof;
- (e) To appoint and employ the services of subordinate officials and employees subject to the confirmation of the Commission;
- (f) To prepare and submit to the Commission budget proposals of all kinds; and
- (g) To perform such other duties and exercise such other powers as may be directed or authorized specifically by the Commission.

SECTION 13. *Prohibition Against Conflict of Interest.* – No members of the Commission shall be financially interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract entered into by the Authority or in any special privilege granted by it. Violation of this prohibition shall constitute a ground for dismissal.

SECTION 14. *Application of Civil Service Laws.* – All officers and employees of the Authority shall be subject to the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management rules and regulations, except those whose positions may, upon recommendation of the Port Commission, be declared by the President of the Philippines as policy determining, primarily confidential or highly technical in nature.

SECTION 15. *Supplies and Services Other Than Personal.* – All purchases or contracts for services, except for personal services, entered into by the Authority shall be done only after public bidding therefor is held: Provided, that such bidding may be required when an emergency, as explained and certified to by the General Manager, requires immediate delivery of the supplies or performance of the services and the unit costs or prices of such emergency procurement do not exceed the latest costs or prices paid by the Authority for the same or similar goods or services: Provided further that the General Manager shall report under oath to the Commission the details of any such emergency procurement within two (2) weeks after its consummation, including a statement of assurance that the transaction constitutes the best arrangement possible under the circumstances.

SECTION 16. *Capitalization.* – The Authority shall have an authorized capital stock equal to and consisting of:

- (a) The value of fixed assets, including port facilities and equipment administered by or belonging to the Port of Bacolod City and such other properties, movable and immovable, within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority as defined in Section 6 hereof, valued on the date of the effectivity of this Act; and
- (b) Government contribution in such amount as may be deemed an appropriate initial balance. Such initial amount, as approved by the President of the Philippines, shall be more or less equivalent to six (6) months working capital requirement of Authority.

SECTION 17. *Auditor and Personnel.* – The Commission on Audit shall appoint a representative who shall be the Auditor of the Authority and the necessary personnel to assist said representative in the performance of his duties. The operating expenses of the auditing office and the salaries of both officials and employees shall be paid by the Authority.

SECTION 18. *Power to Issue Bonds.* – The Authority, to incur indebtedness or to issue bonds to carry out approved capital investment projects, shall be approved by the affirmative vote of at least four (4) of all members of the Commission in a special meeting called for the purpose and

approved by President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Secretary of Finance and the Central Bank of the Philippines.

SECTION 19. *Bond Limits.* – The bonds that may be issued by the Authority shall in no case exceed the total amount of one billion pesos (P1,000,000,000): Provided, that no single issue shall be made if at least seventy percent (70%) of the immediately preceding issue is not yet sold.

The bonds shall be issued only in such amounts as will be needed at only one (1) integral operation not exceeding one (1) year duration, taking into account the state at which said bonds may be absorbed by the buying public and the fund requirements of the project ready for execution, and considering further a proper balance between productive and non-productive projects so that inflation shall be held to a minimum.

SECTION 20. *Form, Rate of Interest, etc. of Bonds.* – The Secretary of Finance of Finance, in consultation with the Monetary Board, shall prescribe the form, the rate of interest, the denominations, maturities, negotiability, convertibility, call and redemption features, and all other terms and conditions of issuances, placement, sale, servicing, redemption, and payment of all bonds issued under the provision of this Act.

The bonds issued by virtue of this Act shall be made payable both as to principal and interest in Philippine currency and shall be acceptable as security in any transaction with the Government in which such security is required.

SECTION 21. *Transfer of Existing Facilities and Intangible Assets.* – All existing facilities including wharves, piers, slips, docks, bulkheads, cargo terminals, warehouses, cold storage, loading and unloading equipment, and passenger terminals and accessories, within the territorial jurisdiction of the Authority; other lands, buildings, and other properties, movable or immovable, belonging to or presently administered by the Philippine Ports Authority; and all assets, powers, rights, interests, and privileges relating to port works or operations, including all equipment are hereby transferred to the Authority.

SECTION 22. *Transfer of Liabilities and Debts.* – Upon the transfer to and acceptance by the Authority of the existing physical facilities, intangible

assets and completed projects referred to in the preceding sections, all debts, liabilities, and obligations of the Philippine Ports Authority in respect of such physical facilities, tangible assets and completed projects within the ports shall likewise be assumed by the Authority.

SECTION 23. *Abolition of the Port Management Office of Bacolod as a Port Management Unit of the Philippine Ports Authority.* – The Port Management Office of Bacolod is hereby abolished. The General Manager of the Authority shall ensure the smooth transfer of responsibility from the abolished entity to the Authority as well as the determination of personnel to be retained: Provided, that all officials and employees whose services are terminated shall, if not eligible for retirement, be given gratuities equivalent to one (1) month salary for every year of continuous satisfactory service on the basis of the highest salary received in addition to other benefits accorded to them by existing laws.

SECTION 24. *Annual Report.* – An annual report of the Authority shall be submitted to the President of the Philippines within sixty (60) days after the close of each fiscal year.

The original of said report shall be submitted to the City Mayor of Bacolod City and copies thereof to the House of Representatives, the Senate of the Philippines, and the Department of Transportation. The report shall include a financial statement duly certified by the Auditor of the Authority.

SECTION 25. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 26. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 27. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 28. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED,