



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 410



Introduced by: **HON. CARL NICOLAS C. CARI**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine government views the coconut industry as one of the key players in the agricultural sector. Coconut has recently become important for food, feed, medicine, cosmetics, renewable energy, and a trading commodity.

With 615,926 hectares planted, the Eastern Visayas region is considered to be the top coconut-producing region in the Visayas (Western, Central, and Eastern Visayas) with a total of 1.08 million metric tons of coconut a year. The production represents a 73% share of the Visayas Coconut Industry. Four hundred fifty-seven thousand twenty-six farmers (457,026) in the Eastern Visayas depend on the industry. Coconuts have a significant impact on the well-being of the rural population. Therefore, coconut research and development in this region is critical.

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) is an agency of the Philippine government under the Department of Agriculture responsible for developing the coconut and other palm oil industries for it to be globally competitive and efficient. It is now mandated to promote the coconut and other palm oil industries' rapid integrated development to ensure that the coconut farmers become direct participants and beneficiaries of such development. To implement this, it has established two (2) coconut research centers in Luzon and two (2) coconut research centers in Mindanao, but NONE in the Visayas.

The Visayas State University (VSU) in Baybay City, Leyte has filled this R&D vacuum through a research center established in 1975 and later renamed as the National Coconut Research Center-Visayas (NCRC-V) in CY 2000 approved by its BOR with funding from the university's income and annual appropriation from the national government.

NCRC-V conducted R&D to improve productivity, efficiency, and profitability of the coconut industry of the Visayas and the country. Its significant accomplishments include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Developed five (5) self-pollinated *Makapuno* hybrids that bear fruits, under optimum care, in 3 to 4 years from planting and ensuring a yield of 90% to 100% *Makapuno* nuts even without isolation from typical coconut palms.
- b. NCRC-V also has selected and developed 11 high-yielding dwarf coconut hybrids, five (5) *Makapuno* hybrids, and four (4) outstanding cultivars. These hybrids and outstanding coconut cultivars are now widely promoted and disseminated to farmer adopters of Regions VII, VIII, and in regions of Mindanao and Southern Luzon;
- c. Distributed thousands of seedlings of the high-yielding "Baybay Tall" cultivar and high-yielding dwarf coconut cultivars in the DA-PCA replanting program to replace senile palms and coconut palms damaged from the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yolanda. Baybay Tall is the only local cultivar of the coconut palm that can rival the yields of the outstanding DA-PCA coconut hybrids;
- d. Capacitated more than 30,000 coconut farmers on recommended practices of growing coconut and on processing various products from coconut;



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- c. Developed small types of machinery and equipment to support the processing and utilization of products and by-products from coconut by small coconut farmers that reduce the production cost, maximize the production capacity and increase farmer's income;
- f. Actively spearheaded the development and implementation of sustainable management strategies for major existing pests of coconuts. A mass production center for pupal parasitoid (*Tetrastichus brontispae*) against *Brontispa longissima* was established in 2011, which successfully mass-produced the parasitoid and hindered the spread of *Brontispa* in Region VIII;
- g. Established a zero-waste processing technology for normal and *Makapuno* coconuts, allowing the coconut farmers and processors to earn more from the crop;
- h. Established more than 23 hectares of community-based coconut-corn-banana intercropping techno-demo sites as livelihood options for typhoon-affected communities in Tacloban City, and the Municipalities of Inopacan, Macrohon, Ormoc, and, Carigara in Region 8, as well as in Bohol and Catmon, Cebu.
- i. Established a coconut gene bank of 46 local and introduced accessions, several demonstration farms, and spearheaded selection of typhoon-tolerant coconut genetic resources from Yolanda-affected areas in Eastern Visayas;

With these accomplishments, the NCRC-Visayas envisages to significantly further its contributions to the coconut industry.

Strengthening NCRC-V an existing and proven research center on coconut is appropriate, cost-effective, and efficient for the government. It will immensely benefit the coconut industry of the Visayas and the country. Furthermore, this bill will strengthen the collaboration between the line agency (DA-PCA) and the academe (VSU), which is a proven effective practice of developed countries in supporting agricultural development.

This bill, therefore, proposes that NCRC-V of Visayas State University be recognized as the zonal coconut research and development center for the Visayas by the DA-PCA and be renamed the Visayas Coconut Research and Development Center (VCRDC) mandated to conduct joint R&D with the DA-PCA, and shall annually and jointly be funded by the PCA and the VSU.

Moreover, this bill was previously filed in the 18th Congress by the undersigned and had been pending with the House Committee on Agriculture and Food since 2021-05-17.

For the preceding reasons, the immediate consideration and approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

Respectfully submitted,

CARL NICOLAS C. CARI
Representative
5th District, Leyte



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Introduced by: **HON. CARL NICOLAS C. CARI**

**AN ACT PROPOSING THE ESTABLISHMENT, RECOGNITION, AND
STRENGTHENING OF THE COCONUT RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE VISAYAS
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF**

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

SECTION 1. Renaming of NCRC-V. The National Coconut Research Center – Visayas, established by the Visayas State University (VSU), will be renamed as Visayas Coconut Research and Development Center (VCRDC).

SECTION 2. The Visayas Coconut Research and Development Center (VCRDC) shall be recognized by the Department of Agriculture – Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA) as the Zonal Research and Development Center of coconut in the Visayas with the following Vision, Mission, and Research and Development Thrusts:

- A. Vision: Center of relevant coconut technologies and development in the Visayas;
- B. Mission: Generate and disseminate relevant coconut technologies towards a profitable, sustainable coconut industry in the Visayas and;
- C. Research and Development Thrusts: Varietal Improvement, Coconut Production & Cultural Management, Pest Management, Climate-smart Coconut Farming System, Product Development and Commercialization, and Socio-economic Research and Extension.

SECTION 3. The VCRDC shall have the following objectives:

- a. To develop innovative agricultural, industrial, and socio-economic research and development programs for the coconut industry for the benefit of the Filipino coconut farmers:
 - Improved and high-yielding coconut varieties
 - Novel products from coconut
 - Advanced techniques on coconut propagation
 - Production and processing machinery systems
 - Climate-smart farming systems
- b. To develop and disseminate improved coconut planting materials;
- c. To serve as a repository of coconut research done by institutions in the Visayas;
- d. To engage collaboration and coordination with institutions of higher learning on local and foreign scholarships and fellowship programs that will enhance coconut development;



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- c. To organize and hold local, regional, or international conferences/fora, on the current trends and developments of the coconut industry;
- f. To develop modern and effective farm extension programs for coconut farmers and other beneficiaries;
- g. To publish and disseminate research findings and make appropriate recommendations to various stakeholders.

SECTION 4. Strengthening of VCRDC through additional funding from the DA-PCA. Through the DA-PCA, the Department of Agriculture shall provide annual financial support and allocation for VCRDC's Research & Development programs.

SECTION 5. Strengthening the Research & Development Collaboration between the DA-PCA and VCRDC. Through the DA-PCA, the Department of Agriculture shall detail at least one DA-PCA Research and Development personnel to jointly implement relevant research and development programs with researchers and staff of VCRDC.

SECTION 6. The amount necessary to carry out this Act's provisions shall be included in the General Appropriation Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

APPROVED,