

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **1504**



Introduced by Honorable Florida P. Robes

Article X, Section 14 of the 1987 Constitution states:

“The President shall provide for regional development council, or other similar bodies composed of local government officials, regional heads of departments and offices, and representatives from non-government organizations within the region for purposes of administrative decentralization to strengthen the autonomy of units therein and to accelerate the economic and social development units in the region.”

This bill seeks to further enhance and strengthen Regional Development Councils by making them more responsive to the needs of their responsive regions through the creation of a central agency that will lead in the crafting of regional development programs on all covered regions.

This will ensure that all economic and social gains, as well as investment opportunities are evenly distributed in all cities and municipalities, especially in areas where they are needed the most.

In view of this, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


FLORIDA P. ROBES

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AN ACT
TO ENHANCE THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS BY CREATING A
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION TO STRENGTHEN THE
POLICY-MAKING CAPABILITIES OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
(NGAs) AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs)
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “Regional Development Administration Act of 2020”.

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to institute an effective regional governance mechanism that shall empower both elective government officials and managers and career officers of National Government Agencies (NGAs), as well non-government organizations at the regional level. The Regional Development Administration will institutionalize the Regional Development Councils (RDCs) to make them more empowered in the coordination, formulation and implementation of regional development plans and investment projects.

Section 3. - *Creation of the Regional Development Administration (RDA).* - There is hereby created the Regional Development Administration (RDA), attached to the National Economic and Development Authority, which will have the lead mandate to establish policies,

priorities, and objectives as well as direct and implement relevant programs and projects in the regional level in line with the government's socio-economic development programs.

Section 4. *Functions.* - The principal functions of the Regional Development Administration are:

- (a) Collect and integrate proposed development projects and investment projects from all the Regional Development Councils all over the country;
- (b) Develop, formulate and establish priority regional development programs based on the proposals from the Regional Development Councils, after due consultations with stakeholders in the municipal, city and provincial levels, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government-owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the regions;
- (c) Submit to the President of the Philippines, annual, medium and long-term development plans and investment projects of Regional Development Councils for consideration and approval;
- (d) Integrate approved development and investment programs for funding and implementation;
- (e) Implement, monitor and evaluate the approved development and investment programs as well as the regional physical framework plan and special development plans;
- (f) Review, prioritize and endorse to the national government the annual and multi-year sectoral investment programs of the region for funding and implementation;
- (g) Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the region to support regional development objectives, policies and strategies;
- (h) Coordinate information activities designed to mobilize public support, cooperation and engagement for development and investment programs;
- (i) As required by the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), review and endorse projects of national government agencies that have an impact on the region and projects of LGUs in the region requiring national government financial exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government budget appropriations or subsidies, among others;

(j) Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several agencies for LGUs;

(k) Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities, government-owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the region; and

(l) Perform such other functions and carry out activities as may be directed by law.

Section 5. *Administrator of the RDA.* - The Regional Development Administration (RDA), shall be headed by an Administrator and who shall be assisted by a Deputy Administrator. They shall be appointed by the President and who shall continue to hold office at the discretion of the appointing authority. The Administrator shall be a member of the RDA Board.

Section 6. *Board of Directors.* - The powers and functions of the Administration shall be vested in and exercised by the Board of Directors composed of the following:

(a) All Provincial Governors;

(b) All Chairpersons of Regional Development Councils;

(c) All NEDA Regional Directors

(d) Private sector representatives (PSRs) who shall comprise one-fourth of the members of the fully-constituted authority, selected in accordance with the guidelines set by Administration.

Section 7. *Powers of the RDA Board.* - The RDA Board shall have the following powers:

(1) To coordinate, formulate and provide comprehensive regional development guidelines for the regions as provided for in this Act;

(2) To receive, integrate, prioritize and endorse to the President, all approved regional development plans in the national development plan;

- (3) To implement and monitor all approved regional development plans and special development projects and submit the appropriate reports on the status of the same to the President semi-annually;
- (4) To coordinate and seek the cooperation of other agencies and instrumentalities of the National Government including government-owned or controlled corporations to enable it to achieve its purposes under this Act;
- (5) To issue orders, not inconsistent with this Act, negotiating the work and conduct of its personnel;
- (6) To appoint, discipline, and remove personnel of the Administration in accordance with laws;
- (7) To perform such acts as are proper and necessary to carry out the purposes of the Administration.

Section 8. Appointment of Co-Administrator. - In line with the government's thrust on decentralization, the Board shall nominate at least three (3) local chief executives who are members of the Administration from whom the President shall select and appoint the RDA Co-Administrator. Regional Directors of national government agencies in the region shall not be included in the selection of nominees for Chairman and Co-Chairman.

Section 9. Functions/Powers and Responsibilities of the Administrator and Co-Administrator. – The Chairman/Co-Chairman shall have the following functions, powers and responsibilities:

- a. To implement, enforce, and apply the policies, programs, plans, standards, guidelines, procedures, decisions, rules and regulations issued, prescribed, or adopted by the Board;
- b. Direct the affiliate committees and regional line agencies of the RDA to perform tasks the Board may deem necessary;
- c. Accept, in behalf of the Board, donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts;

- d. Represent the Administration in Cabinet meetings and other activities at the national level;
- e. Submit to the President plans, regional investment programs, annual development reports and other documents on the region as approved by the Board; and
- f. Perform other functions and duties as may be directed by the Board.

Section 10. *RDA Secretariat.* — The Administration shall organize a Secretariat that shall assist the Administrator and Co-Administrator in the performance of their functions and shall oversee the technical, administrative and financial operations of the Administration and shall be accountable for the funds and properties of the RDA.

It shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President. The Executive Director shall execute the policies and programs of the Administration and shall be responsible for the efficient and effective day-to-day management of the operations of the RDA.

The Executive Director shall recommend to the Administrator and Co-Administrator, for approval of the Board, the budget of the Secretariat, its staffing pattern, position classification and compensation scheme, and the appointment of its personnel subject to existing laws, rules and regulations.

Section 11. *Term of Office.* – The RDA Co-Administrator who is a local chief executive and private sector representatives shall serve in the Administration for a fixed term of three (3) years coinciding with the regular term of local elective officials.

Section 12. *Meetings.* - The RDA shall meet at least once every other month. It may adopt its own rules on constituting a quorum.

Section 13. *Executive Committee.* – The Regional Development Administration shall create an Executive Committee to act on matters that require immediate attention for and in behalf of the RDA when it is not in session. The Executive Committee shall comprise one-fourth of the total membership of the fully-constituted Administration, the membership shall be determined by the RDA.

Section 14. *Sectoral Committees.* – To assist the Administration in the performance of its functions, the Council shall create sectoral committees to handle social, economic, infrastructure, and development administration concerns whose composition shall be determined by the Board. The sectoral committees shall perform functions analogous to and supportive of the functions of the Regional Development Council. They shall review and endorse matters pertaining to their respective sectors to the RDC and/or the RDA Board.

Section 15. *Advisory Committee.* – To further strengthen the coordinative and consultative mechanism in the regions, there is hereby created an Advisory Committee to advise, assist and support the Administration in discharging its functions. It shall be composed of the members of the House of Representatives representing the provinces and districts of the region who shall signify their intention to become members thereof in writing, and members of the Council's Executive Committee.

The Administrator and Co-Administrator shall also serve as the officers of the Advisory Committee.

The Committee may meet as often as necessary but not less than once a semester.

Section 16. *Affiliate Committees.* - The various committees and councils organized to carry out national and agency programs are considered to be under the umbrella of the Administration. Their role shall be to assist the Administration to coordinate, monitor and evaluate their respective specific concerns. In general, secretariat functions to these bodies shall be provided by the lead agency that organized the council/committee.

Section 17. *Regional Development Councils.* – Every region shall have a Regional Development Council which shall be the lead policy-making body in the region and which shall be composed of the following as members:

- (a) All provincial governors;
- (b) All city mayors;
- (c) All municipal mayors;
- (d) The regional directors of agencies represented in the National Economic and Development Authority Board (NEDA, DAR, DA, DBM, DENR, DOF, DFA, DOH, DILG, DOLE, DPWH, DOST, DTI, DOTr, BSP) and the regional directors of DepEd, DSWD and DOT; Provided: That each agency shall be represented by only one regional director; and

- (e) Private sector representatives (PSRs) who shall comprise one-fourth of the members of the fully-constituted authority, selected in accordance with the guidelines set by RDA.

Section 18. *Functions of the Regional Development Council.* – The Regional Development Council shall have the following functions:

- (a) Coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of short and long-term regional development plans and investment programs, regional physical framework plan and special development plans, including the formulation of policy recommendations;
- (b) Integrate approved development plans of provinces and cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the region into the regional development plan;
- (c.) Review, prioritize, and endorse to the Board government the annual and multi-year sectoral investment programs of the region for funding and implementation;
- (c) Review and endorse to the national government the annual budgets of agency regional offices, state colleges and universities and special development authorities;
- (d) Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the region to support regional development objectives, policies and strategies;
- (f) Review and endorse national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the regions;
- (f) As required by the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), review and endorse projects of national government agencies that have impact on the region and projects of Local Government Units (LGUs) in the region requiring national government financial exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government budget appropriations or subsidies, among others;
- (h) Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several agencies or LGUs;
- (i) Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and

universities, government-owned and/or -controlled corporations and special development authorities in the region; and

(j) Perform other related functions and activities as may be necessary to promote and sustain the socio-economic development of the regions.

Section 19. *Secretariat of the Regional Development Councils.* – The NEDA Regional Office shall be the Secretariat of the RDC. The NEDA Regional Director shall manage the technical, administrative and financial operations of the RDC and shall be accountable for the funds and properties of the RDC.

Section 20. *Appropriations.* - To carry out the purposes of this Act, the initial amount of One billion pesos (P1,000,000,000) is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the necessary for the creation of the RDA, its operations, project monitoring and evaluation, and implementation of programs and special projects and shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, subject to the usual auditing rules and regulations.

Section 21. *Non-Applicability.* – This Act shall not apply to the National Capital Region, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Section 22. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* - The NEDA Board is hereby directed to prepare and adopt detailed guidelines to implement the specific provisions of this Act.

Section 23. *Separability Clause* - If any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, other parts for provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to remain in full force and effect.

Section 24. *Non-Impairment Clause.* - Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

Section 25. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 26. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following completion of its publication in the Official Gazette and in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,