



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3547



Introduced by Representative Lex Anthony Cris A. Colada

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Recent studies have shown that the average age of the Filipino farmer is 57 years old. This would show that under most retirement and pension schemes, majority of our farmers should already qualify for pension and retirements benefits, if they were included in the coverage. Sad to say, agricultural workers and other workers in the informal sector are not covered by pension programs of the government either through the GSIS, SSS or other special laws.

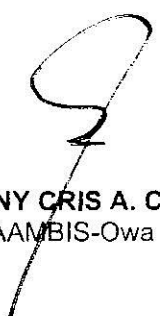
This is a huge injustice considering that the agricultural sector is among the most important sector in the country, contributing P13 billion or about 9% of the GDP and agricultural workers making up 26.1% of the country's labor force or about 11.29 million workers. This means that more than one-fourth of the country's labourers are not covered by retirement and pension benefits.

Our senior citizen farmers and agricultural workers are forced to continue working long hours in undesirable conditions, just to continue to support themselves and their families. This could lead to health issues considering their advanced age and frail dispositions.

This lack of long-term benefits, in addition to the low income and intensive work are perhaps also one of the reasons why less and less people are entering and working in the agricultural sector. This continuing decline of agricultural workers would spell disaster for our food security in the future should it be allowed to continue.

Our farmers remain the poorest of the poor among the country's labor force and it is only right that the government extend all manner of support towards them. Giving them the benefit of a pension is just one of the many ways of providing them the social protection that they rightfully deserve.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


LEX ANTHONY CRIS A. COLADA
AAMBIS-Owa Partylist



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1 **AN ACT**
2 **CREATING AN AGRICULTURAL PENSION FUND TO PROVIDE PENSION**
3 **BENEFITS TO FARMERS AND FISHER FOLK**

4 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
5 *Congress assembled:*
6

7 **SECTION 1. Title** – This Act shall be known as the “**Agricultural Pension**
8 **Fund Act**”

9 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy** – The Constitution provides that the State
10 shall, from time to time, review to upgrade the pensions and other benefits due to
11 retirees of both the government and private sectors. As far as may be possible, it
12 should provide to those who have less in life the opportunity to earn for their living so
13 that they may play a more active role in social life and especially in the economic
14 and political spheres. It is the duty of the State to create conditions which are
15 necessary to realize the right of all citizens particularly the underprivileged the equal
16 opportunity.

17 **SEC. 3. Creation of the Agricultural Pension Fund** – The Agricultural
18 Pension Fund is hereby established to provide pension benefits to agricultural
19 workers, specifically farmers and fisherfolk.

1 **SEC. 4. *Implementing Agency.*** – The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation
2 (PCIC), an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA) shall be the main
3 implementing agency of the provisions of this Act. To fulfill the goals of this Act, it
4 shall perform the following duties and functions:

5 a. Manage and invest the funds properly to ensure sustainability and increased
6 capacity to provide benefits;

7 b. Create a pension plan that shall become the basis for the allocation of
8 benefits to its pensioners;

9 c. Promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act;

10 d. Coordinate with other relevant agencies in the fulfilment of the goals of this
11 Act; and

12 e. Perform other duties and functions towards and efficient and effective
13 implementation of this Act.

14 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*** – Within ninety (90) days
15 from the effectivity of this Act, the PCIC Board of Directors shall, in consultation with
16 the Secretary of Agriculture and representatives of recognized farmers and
17 fisherfolk's groups, promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the effectivity of
18 this Act.

19 **SEC. 6. *Appropriations*** – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such
20 amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the
21 National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of
22 the Program shall be included in the annual appropriation of the DA.

1 **SEC. 7. Separability Clause** -- If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected
3 shall remain valid and subsisting.

4 **SEC. 8. Repealing Clause** -- Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
5 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule and regulation
6 contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified,
7 or amended accordingly.

8 **SEC. 9. Effectivity Clause** -- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
9 its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

10 *Approved,*