

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4104



Introduced by Representative Edsel A. Galeos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure aims to establish a multi-species marine hatchery in the Municipality of Argao, Province of Cebu.

Fishermen are among the poorest sectors in the country according to the Philippine Statistics Authority. Unfortunately, issues concerning the aquaculture industry only make our fishermen more vulnerable.

One of the issues our fishermen face is the inconsistent supply of fish and other aquaculture products. Supply of marine products have dwindled over time while the demand created by consumers is only increasing. Fishermen in the Second District of the Province of Cebu expressed alarm over the fact that they have less and smaller fish to catch. They start working in the wee hours of the morning but they, at times, come home empty-handed. The instability of their livelihood creates financial difficulties for these fishermen and their dependents.

Catching fish and other aquaculture products is also dependent on climate and weather changes. Fishermen have less fish to catch during months when storms are frequent or when typhoons hit the country. In the Philippines, it is estimated that around 20 typhoons visit per year. Aside from detrimentally affecting the supply of marine products, typhoons and other extreme weather occurrences also damage the equipment that these fishermen use.

While our country is an archipelago and is naturally rich in marine products, various factors and issues such as overfishing and climate change may negatively impact our natural resources. With the increase in demand for marine products, not only locally but also in international markets, there is a need to boost local production through sustainable means.

Through the establishment of a multi-species marine hatchery, the government will be able help increase the production of aquaculture products and reduce dependence on imported fry. The bill also aims to bring other benefits such as lower cost of capital for fish farmers due to lower cost of fry, increase of smaller nurseries in the province, and increase in local jobs related to fisheries. In establishing a hatchery, we can ensure that there is a consistent supply of fish all year round. Ultimately, this

measure will provide much needed assistance to our fisherfolk to reduce the difficulties that they face in their sector.

The proposed measure also provides for training and phasing-in before the transfer of the operations of the marine hatchery from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture to the local government.

For the foregoing reasons, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



EDSEL A. GALEOS

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTISPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF ARGAO, PROVINCE OF CEBU AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** There shall be established, under the supervision of the Bureau of
2 Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture (BFAR-DA), a
3 multispecies marine hatchery in the Municipality of Argao, Province of Cebu.
4

5 **SECTION 2.** The BFAR-DA shall, within three (3) years after the establishment
6 of the multispecies hatchery, transfer the management of the same to the local
7 government unit concerned through a memorandum of agreement. It shall implement a
8 training and phasing-in program for local government personnel on the management
9 and operation of the hatchery.
10

11 **SECTION. 3.** The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's
12 program the establishment of the multi-purpose marine hatchery in the Municipality of
13 Argao, Province of Cebu, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General
14 Appropriation Act. The local government concerned shall set aside funds from any
15 available local revenue in an amount deemed appropriate for the operationalization of
16 the hatchery.
17

18 **SECTION. 4.** Within sixty (60) days from the passage of this Act, the Secretary
19 of Agriculture shall issue the rules and regulations on the supervision, monitoring,
20 transfer, or withdrawal by the BFAR of the multi-species marine hatchery.
21

22 **SECTION. 5.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
23 the Official gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.
24

25 Approved,