

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4232



Introduced by Representative Richard I. Gomez

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is predominantly an agricultural country where more than half of its population resides in rural areas, with farming as the main source of income. In the country's pursuit of post-pandemic socio-economic recovery, which includes food security, it is critical that the government prioritize agricultural technological advancement as part of its national programs.

At present, we continue to experience a decline in the agricultural sector's contribution to total employment, with only 22.9 percent of overall employment engaged in agriculture. This can be attributed to various factors, including the high incidence of poverty among farmers. If we continue with status quo mechanics in farming, there is little hope for improving farmers' standard of living. This would compound our food security problem, as more and more farmers would seek better and more stable income opportunities in cities, thereby creating an agricultural capacitation problem in rural areas.

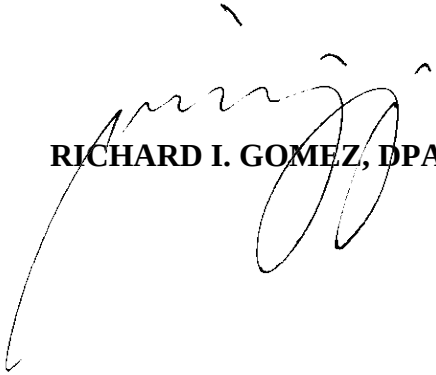
On top of this, the issues of climate change and its impact on the agriculture sector pose as added stress to the country's food security. The World Bank emphasized that the country may lose up to 91 trillion pesos by 2030, if the "services provided by nature (would) collapse and if no smart policies will be implemented to protect the country's biodiversity." To this end, agricultural disaster resilience infrastructure projects are planned to fortify the sector. Nevertheless, infrastructure solutions would still be inadequate without technological assistance that capacitate farmers in better responding to the impacts of disasters on farming and fisheries, as well as improving our overall environmental stewardship.

Hence, this bill, seeks to establish the Philippine National Agriculture Information System (PNAIS) in all cities and municipalities in the country, to create one centralized database under

the Department of Agriculture that would link all systems to streamline the country's agricultural planning process and trading activities. The PNAIS, at the local level, shall serve as an online tool and marketplace that houses real-time information on agricultural and fisheries commodities, as well as facilitate direct buying-selling transactions of agricultural products nationwide, thereby increasing farmers' profits per transaction.

This bill enthusiastically supports the thrust of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., to prioritize, modernize and make the Philippine agricultural sector internationally competitive, once again. Moreover, this bill is aimed at empowering Filipino farmers and improving their productivity, resilience and profitability.

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



RICHARD I. GOMEZ, DPA

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION. 1. *Title.* — This Act shall be known as the “Philippine National Agricultural Information System Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — In Section 5, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution, the State is mandated to "provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services." In pursuit of modernizing and improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, the establishment of a nationwide, integrated, digitalized, web-based agricultural commodity supply inventory and registry system is imperative. This information system would not just provide information on agricultural commodities and a digital market place platform for local farmers to sell directly to buyers, but also other critical information, such as, localized inclement weather advisories and information on agricultural support services, such as, storage, drying facilities and an online market for agricultural inputs.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* — This Act aims to attain the following objectives:

- (A) Link the Department of Agriculture (DA), LGU Agricultural Offices, individual farmers, organized agricultural organizations and communities nationwide to an easy-to-access digital agricultural information system;

- (B) Provide real-time information on commodity prices at the local, national and international levels;
- (C) Provide an up-to-date database of agricultural and fisheries inventories per LGU;
- (D) Provide a nationwide online agricultural market that would enable direct transactions between farmers and buyers, thereby increasing the farm gate prices for farmers;
- (E) Allow LGUs to manage and customize their information database to suit the needs of local farmers and fisheries stakeholders;
- (F) Allow farmers to directly register and upload or share pertinent information on their farming inventories, and carry out their own transactions;
- (G) Ensure that all forms of assistance given to local government units (LGUs), registered cooperatives and other qualified individuals and organizations are digitally-documented and tracked; and
- (H) Allow the DA to access real-time aggregate agricultural information for the country and thereby aid the agency in making timely, responsive and impactful policies to improve overall national agricultural performance.

SEC. 4. *Philippine National Agricultural Information System.*— The Department of Agriculture (DA) is hereby mandated to design, create and establish the Philippine National Agricultural Information System (PNAIS), hereinafter referred to as the “Information System .” The AIS shall serve as a dynamic, online, digital database and software application, that is accessible both via the internet from either: (a) desktop or laptop computers and (b) a DA-proprietary mobile phone application.

The DA shall accommodate the main servers and software platforms in its own information and data centers, to ensure web and online security. The PNAIS shall be designed such that a uniform, yet customizable, interface be disseminated and thereafter managed by each LGU Agricultural Office in the country. The AIS shall also be integrated with the existing systems of the DA.

The Information System shall have (but not limited to) the following features and contents:

- a) Registry of farmers, including:
 - Demographic details of individual farmers and/or farming enterprise or organization, including age group, gender, ethnic group, income, seminars and trainings attended, and assistance received;
 - Farm location, type and crops;

- b) Inventory management, including:
 - Historical harvest volumes per crop, livestock, and fisheries types
 - Harvest forecasting per crop, livestock and fisheries types
 - Unified system of inventory to allow for real-time aggregate, national information processing;
- c) Online marketplace, including search options for buyers and sellers of agricultural, fisheries and agro-forestry products, inputs, equipment and semi-value added products; and
- d) Flexible report generation from both the national and local levels.

SEC. 5. *Registration.*— All cities and municipalities shall encourage and facilitate the free registration of all farmers, fisherfolk, suppliers, and buyers transacting within their respective areas in the Information System.

SEC. 6. *Functions and Responsibilities of Cities and Municipalities.* — The LGU shall exercise the following functions and responsibilities:

- a) The City/Municipal Agriculture Office, in coordination with the Municipal Agrarian Reform Office, shall gather, encode, and consolidate all pertinent data on the profile and demographics of farmers, fisherfolk as well as buyers;
- b) Conduct capacity building training to orient the stakeholders, especially farmers, on the use of the Information System;
- c) Monitor and control farm inputs including machineries and equipment;
- d) For municipalities and component cities, prepare and submit real-time data to the provincial agricultural office and to the respective regional offices of the DA;
- e) For highly urbanized cities, submit real-time data to the respective regional offices of the DA;
- f) Establish farmer and buyer linkages and act as a gatekeeper at the city or municipal level in the nationwide marketing of agricultural products; and
- g) Serve as the web administrator at the municipal or city level and be responsible for integrating farm and fisheries locations into the geographic integration system map.

SEC. 7. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Province.* — The provincial government shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- a) The Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) is the web administrator at the provincial level and is responsible for integrating farm and

fisheries data into the geographic integration system maps for agriculture and fisheries;

- b) The Local Economic and Investment Promotion Office (LEIPO) acts as the lead administrator of the PNAIS in the provincial level and ensures the balance between supply and demand;
- c) The Provincial Agricultural Office monitors the submission of reports from municipalities and component cities, and ensures the completeness, accuracy, and validity of data submitted by the Municipal Agricultural Offices and the Municipal Agrarian Reform Offices; and
- d) Except for highly urbanized cities, prepare and submit such data to the regional office of the DA.

SEC. 8. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Regional Office of the DA.* — The regional office of the DA shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- a) Integrated the data provided by the provinces and highly urbanized cities in the existing information systems of the DA such as the National Farmers and Fisheries Information System (NFFIS) which is a web-based data collection system that serves as a platform for updating the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA);
- b) Collaborate with the regional offices of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in order to facilitate the availment of the various programs of the DTI as well as strengthen market linkages through such programs;
- c) Recommend to the central office of the DA appropriate interventions in the form of marketing, importation, and training assistance, as may be needed;
- d) Validate the data from the LGUs acting as the system administrator at the regional level and provide real-time report to the central office of the DA; and
- e) Endorse for financial assistance the qualified fifth and sixth class municipalities that can be given assistance in establishing and maintaining their respective AIS.

SEC. 9. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Central Office of the DA.* — The central office of the DA shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- a) Allocate funding for the design, creation and establishment of of the Philippine National Agricultural Information System (PNAIS);
- b) Undertake the design, creation and establishment of the PNAIS, after consultation with local farmers, LGUs, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), agriculture-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic organizations, agricultural trading organizations, international agricultural organizations, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Department of Information

and Communications Technology (DICT) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC);

- c) Allocate funding for the integration of the Information System with existing information systems;
- d) Coordinate with the DICT to upgrade, expand, and integrated its information systems;
- e) Ensure that the implementation, appropriate verification processes and information safeguards are in place pursuant to existing laws and regulations, in coordination with the DICT, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), National Privacy Commission (NPC), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST);
- f) Approve the prioritized interventions by the regional offices and allocate corresponding funding;
- g) Collaborate with other agencies for the creation of market linkages in the domestic and international markets; and
- h) Provide safety nets in the import and export of agricultural products in order to support farmers.

SEC. 10. *Reports.* — The Secretary of the DA shall prepare and submit to the President and both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of the program which shall contain the list of accomplishments and recommendations for improvements.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* — The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's programs the establishment of the PNAIS, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The LGUs shall provide the necessary funds for the management of their local PNAIS in their respective annual budgets.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and in effect.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* — Any other law, issuance or part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

