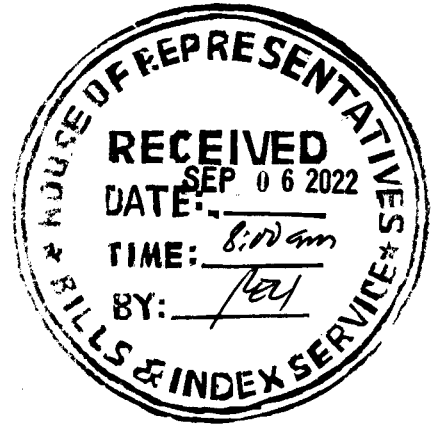


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4443**



Introduced by Rep. LORETO B. ACHARON

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Office in the Lone Legislative District of the City of General Santos as DTI's key unit for field operations, program delivery and initiatives focused on improving business delivery services in General Santos City – one of six Highly Urbanized Cities (HUC) in the Island of Mindanao.

As the agency of government responsible for trade, industry and investments, DTI is the primary coordinative, promotive, facilitative, and regulatory arm of the State that acts as catalyst for intensified private sector activity to accelerate and sustain economic growth.

In recent years, the role of DTI has evolved in such a manner that today, the department is geared not only to support trade growth, but more importantly, to also improve the ease of doing business and alleviate pressures that may result in unwarranted unemployment.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) recently announced that the unemployment rate for June 2022 has decreased from 7.7% for the same period last year to 6%; a significant development resulting from proactive efforts to ensure the continued recovery of industries who experienced untold hardships, and to alleviate further pressure particularly on the workforce amidst the COVID 19 pandemic.

General Santos City as well is not exempted from the effects of the pandemic particularly since many business establishments temporarily ceased operations, if not closing their doors for good, majority of which are micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs); and albeit with the gradual lifting of restrictions on mobility and economic activities, a complete package of assistance still needs to be introduced, pursued, and provided.

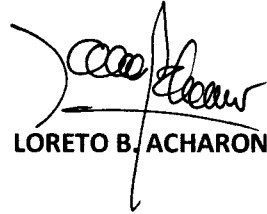
The proposed establishment of a DTI Office in lieu of the existing DTI Field Office (Satellite Office) in General Santos City is already long overdue even before the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic and without question, is the more appropriate response to the concerns of the business sector under the new normal; and the establishment of which is necessitated to complement the efforts of the private sector and other stakeholders as evidenced by endorsements duly submitted by the Regional Development Council of Region 12, City Government of General Santos, General Santos City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc., Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc., Federation of Fishing & Allied Industries, Inc., South Cotabato Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Inc. and a host of other business organizations as well.

With the recent passage of Republic Act Numbered 11659 or "An Act Amending Commonwealth Act No. 146, otherwise known as the "Public Service Act"; and Republic Act Numbered 11647 or "An Act Promoting Foreign Investments, amending thereby Republic Act No. 7042 otherwise known as 'The Foreign Investments Act of 1991' as amended and for other Purposes", a DTI Office is of utmost necessity given that on the average, there are at least 10,200 business registrants per year in General Santos City and as per their record and experience the highest personnel to client ratio of 1:927.

The City of General Santos also plays a very important role for the Philippines in the East Asian Growth Area, a regional alliance and initiative to boost growth in trade, investments, and tourism through new, enhanced interconnectivity by sea and air with neighboring Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The magnitude and scope of the concerns, issues and needs of stakeholders in General Santos City that the Department of Trade and Industry is mandated to resolve, respond to, and provide cannot be accomplished satisfactorily by a mere field office or satellite office as the case may be, whose personnel complement, resources and authority are limited if not all restrictive.

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



LORETO B. ACHARON

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4443

Introduced by Rep. LORETO B. ACHARON

**AN
ACT ESTABLISHING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI) OFFICE
IN THE CITY OF GENERAL SANTOS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

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

SECTION 1. A city office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is hereby established in the City of General Santos, to be known as the “DTI General Santos City Office”.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall immediately include in the department’s program the operationalization of the DTI General Santos City Office, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year’s appropriation of the existing DTI General Santos City Field Office. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operations of the DTI General Santos City Office shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 3. The Secretary of DTI shall issue such rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette, or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED.