

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
4526
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by Rep. LORETO B. ACHARON

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Communication at sea between vessels and ports via radio and other telecommunications equipment is essential for the safe, smooth, and secured passage of ships, ensuring stability of maritime activities and guarantees as well that assistance to ships in distress are provided promptly and coordinated successfully.

The appropriate licenses to operate telecommunications equipment used by ships are regulated and issued by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), an attached agency of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

In accordance with its mandate, NTC issues the following documents for ships intended for international trade, namely Cargo Ship Safety Radio Certificate (CSSRC), Ship Radio Station License (RSL), Ship Earth Station License (SES) and Special Permit for Domestic Vessels to Engage Temporarily in International Trade.

In addition to the aforementioned licenses, Fisheries Administrative Order (FA) 266 series of 2020 specifically Sections 10 and 13, requires all commercial fishing vessels to secure a certification confirming that an accredited Automatic Location Communicator (ALC) is installed and verified as fully operational by DA_BFAR, and accredited by NTC as a prerequisite for the registration or license renewal of commercial fishing vessels.

In 2020, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) registered a combined total of 1,783 commercial fishing vessels for 155 commercial fishing operators and 10,029 municipal fishing vessels in Region XII, all of which are required to secure their licenses to operate communications equipment from the NTC Regional Office 12 located in the City of Koronadal.

This bill therefore seeks the establishment of a satellite office of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) in the Lone District of the City of General Santos to accord would be registrants such as commercial fishing operators and municipal fishing operators, immediate access to their services.

The City of Koronadal is approximately 60 kilometers, more or less by land travel from General Santos City and usually takes an hour and forty-five minutes minimum to reach.

A satellite office of the NTC in General Santos City will greatly reduce the time and transportation costs currently incurred by fishing operators as they comply with the license registration and regulatory requirements.

In the recently concluded 22nd National Tuna Congress held on September 1 to 2 in General Santos City, the importance of a satellite office in General Santos City was raised by commercial and municipal fishing operators as a priority concern, thus this proposal.

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



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AN
**ACT ESTABLISHING A SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NTC) IN THE LONE DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF
GENERAL SANTOS TO BE KNOWN AS THE "NTC GENERAL SANTOS SATELLITE
OFFICE", AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.**

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

SECTION 1. A satellite office of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) is hereby established in the Lone District of the City of General Santos to be known as the "NTC General Santos Satellite Office".

SEC. 2. The Commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall include in the agency's program the operationalization of a satellite office in the City of General Santos, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the NTC Regional Office XII.

Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operations of the NTC General Santos Satellite Office shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 3. Effectivity – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED.