

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

19TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5651



Introduced by Representative Michael L. Romero

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** is the sole national soil resource agency in the Philippines. It is under the **Department of Agriculture**. Initially established on June 5, 1951 as the Bureau of Soil Conservation, the Bureau through the decades has expanded its range of services besides the soil conservation and sustainable agricultural land management advocacy to include soil resources assessment and mapping, agricultural water resources management, analytical services, and soil and water resources research and development.

While the **Local Government Code** empowers the local governments to provide the agricultural extension services to individual farmers, **BSWM** extends its range of services also to farmer groups enabling them to avail of technical assistance on soil and water-related agricultural production constraints. Dialogues and consultation meetings are conducted with the local government's coordination to be able to raise consciousness as well as address such soil and water-related issues and concerns that affect farm productivity and profitability.

This House Bill seeks to provide **Modernization Funding** to the **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)**, to promote soil conservation and sustainable agricultural land management advocacy to include soil resources assessment and mapping, agricultural water resources management, analytical services, and soil and water resources research and development.

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Thus, the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael L. Romero', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

MICHAEL L. ROMERO

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

19TH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 5651

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AN ACT

PROVIDING FOR MODERNIZATION FUNDINGFOR THE **BUREAU OF SOILS AND WATER MANAGEMENT (BSWM)**, INCREASING AND REORGANIZING ITS ADMINISTRATION, PROVIDING FOR A SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS, HEALTH-SAFE AND FOOD RESOURCE PRODUCTION THAT IS ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AND SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. DECLARATION OF POLICY – It shall hereby be a declared policy of the State to formulate measures and guidelines for the effective utilization of soil and water resources as vital agricultural resources to attain food security and safety, environmental stability through soil and water resources-based adaptation and mitigation measures that address multi-environmental concerns on land degradation, climate change, and agricultural biodiversity conservation.

The state shall continually improve the effectiveness of our Quality Management System towards equitable development for improved quality of life for all.

The state shall formulate policies for the efficient and effective administration and management of all manpower, skills and competencies to ensure compliance.

SECTION 2. MODERNIZATION FUNDING. – The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (**Php 500,000,000.00**) for the operation and administration of the **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** shall be chargeable against funds for the purpose and other sources recommended by the **Department of Budget and Management (DBM)**. Thereafter, appropriations for the **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** shall be included in the budget proposals under the Department Agriculture (**DA**).

The Department of Budget and Management (**DBM**) shall rationalize the existing organizational structure and staffing pattern of the in accordance with the provisions of this Act and relevant compensation and position classification laws, rules and regulations.

Thereafter, the amount needed for the continued implementation of the modernization program, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (**GAA**).

SECTION 3. BUREAU OF SOILS AND WATER MANAGEMENT (BSWM) MODERNIZATION FUND – There is hereby created the (**BSWM**) *Modernization Fund* to be used exclusively for the (**BSWM**) *Modernization Program*.

The (**BSWM**) *Modernization Fund* shall be administered by the Secretary of the **DA** in accordance with existing government budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

SECTION 4. PROGRESS REPORT – The Secretary of **DA** shall prepare an annual report on the status of the implementation of the (**BSWM**)

Modernization Programs which shall be submitted, to the Office of the President and to the Chairpersons of the Committee of Agriculture and Food of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

SECTION 5. PERIOD OF IMPLEMENTATION – The modernization program under this Act shall be implemented for an initial period of two **(2)** years:

Provided, that payments for multi-year contract obligations incurred under this Act may extend beyond this period:

Provided, further, That the **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** shall continue to develop, modernize and constantly update its operational capabilities to keep pace with best global practices.

SECTION 6. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS. – The **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** shall continue to exercise and uphold the following powers and functions; but not limited to:

- a) Provide continuing assessment of the sustainability of the country's agricultural production systems, particularly soils and water as vital agricultural resources
- b) Sustain Philippine agriculture through the promotion of sustainable agricultural land management practices in the croplands, as well as in the marginal uplands, hillylands, and highlands
- c) Formulate, through a participatory process, a national research and development agenda on sustainable agricultural land management; undertake upstream and midstream researches including location-specific and targeted researches in the generation of public goods and services in critical areas outside of comparative advantage

of various specialized research institutes of the Department and the country's SUCs; provide leadership in the development and operation of a network of institutions on soil and water resources research and development.

- d)** Strengthen the convergence efforts of concerned agencies (DAR, DENR and DA) on sustainable rural development to include climate change, land degradation and bio-diversity concerns
- e)** Render assistance and advice on policy matters related to the mitigation of the effects of extreme climate events on agricultural lands; design and develop rainwater harvesting (small water impounding) and other water-related small-scale infrastructures; and formulate recommendations on waste water use and reuse
- f)** Engage in rain making projects for agricultural areas and watersheds to address the problems of prolonged droughts and minimize their effects to standing agricultural crops
- g)** Recommend appropriate soil and water management policies to address issues on food security, environment, biodiversity, and climate change, including vulnerability/disaster risk assessment relative to agriculture
- h)** Provide technical support services through the conduct of laboratory analysis on soils, water, and plant tissues; provide fertilization guides and recommendations; provide soil inoculants, compost fungus activators (CFA) and other microbial agents.

SECTION 7. INCREASE OF PERSONNEL. – The **Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)** shall maintain the sufficient staffing pattern. Hence, it is authorized to increase its manpower to meet such required and may

continue to increase personnel per percentage rate increase of committed mandates annually or as the need arises.

SECTION 8. TRANSITORY PROVISION – Existing industries, businesses and offices affected by the implementation of this Act shall be given six **(6)** months transitory period from the effectivity of the IRR or such other period as may be determined, to comply with the requirements of this Act.

SECTION 9. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – The departments and agencies charged with carrying out the provisions of this Act shall, within sixty **(60)** days after the effectivity of this Act, formulate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SECTION 10. REPEALING CLAUSE. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 12. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation whichever comes earlier.

Approved,