

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5739



Introduced by

HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
and
HON. JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE FIBER INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has an abundance of natural fibers like abaca, *piña*, *t'nalak*, bamboo, waterlily, etc. Natural fibers are used in various applications – building materials, particle boards, insulation boards, human food and animal feed, cosmetics, medicine, and for other biopolymers and fine chemicals. And now, due to technological advancements, it is also used in the textile industry. Further, when these are properly developed and protected, it will greatly contribute to the country's economic growth due to its better formability, abundant, renewable, cost-effective, sustainable, and eco-friendly features.

However, while the fiber industry boosted due to its contribution in the textile industry, reports show another decline in such industry. This is caused by new machines that are too advanced to farmers, limited farms dedicated to cultivating the crops, numerous typhoons massively damaging the farms, few programs that support and maintain the development, production, and processing of the fiber crops, and covid-induced movement restrictions imposed by different local government units hindering the transport and movement, among others.

This bill seeks to institutionalize the country's Fiber Industry Development Program which shall serve as a guide to the formulation and implementation of plans, projects, programs, and policies for the scientific propagation, processing, utilization, and expansion of trade of the Philippine major fibers. Further, it will revive the development, production, processing, marketing, and distribution of local fibers which will then generate more job opportunities and provide income to people living in rural areas thus spurring economic growth.

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



Rep. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan



Rep. JUDE A. ACIDRE
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Fiber Industry Development Program of 2022."

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of the Filipino people to a better quality of life, improve their living conditions, through programs that provide sustainable livelihood, increase employment, and protect the environment.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as:

- a) *Program* refers to the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Program (PFIDP) designed to promote the competitiveness of the Philippine fiber industry worldwide.
- b) *Philippine Fiber Industry Development Council (PFIDC)* refers to the council established herewith.
- c) *Secretariat* refers to the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine

Textile Research Institute (DOST-PTRI) which shall be the Secretariat of the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Coordinating Council as contained herewith.

Section 4. *Creation of the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Coordinating Council (PFIDCC).* There is hereby created a Philippine Fiber Industry Development Coordinating Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, administratively attached to the DOST-PTRI, charged with the main function of coordinating the activities of various agencies and instrumentalities to ensure the accomplishment of the Philippine Fiber Framework for Development.

The Chairman of the Council shall submit an annual report to both Houses of Congress on the status of the implementation of this Act.

Section 5. *Composition of the PFIDCC.* The PFIDCC shall be composed of the following:

- a) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology as Chairman (DOST);
- b) The Executive Director of Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) as Head of the Council Secretariat;
- c) Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);
- d) Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);
- e) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA);
- f) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
- g) Representative from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines;
- h) Representative from the League of Provinces;
- i) Representative from the state universities and colleges (SUCs) with Fiber Development Extension Program;
- j) Representative from a reputable Private Fiber Industry Association;
- k) Two (2) Representatives from Fiber Farmers/Producers/Processors' Associations; and
- l) One (1) Representative from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The council shall regularly meet every two (2) months and may hold special meetings, whenever the need arises, to consider urgent matters upon the call of the Chairman or any seven (7) Council members.

Section 6. *Institutionalizing the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Program (PFIDP).* There is hereby established the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Program, within the mandate of the DOST-PTRI, which shall be a ten (10) year framework and shall serve as guide to the formulation and implementation of plans, projects, programs and policies for the scientific propagation, processing, utilization, and expansion of trade of Philippine major fibers. The Framework shall likewise provide for the following:

- a) *Site Identification.* The DENR in coordination with the DA, DAR and the local government units (LGUs), shall identify the broad areas suitable for the planning and propagation of Philippine fibers, within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act.
- b) *Scientific Propagation and Development.* The DENR and the DOST shall establish cultivation and propagation of Philippine disease-free and disease-resistant varieties of Philippine major fibers. The DOST shall also provide for the transfer and improvement of appropriate technology and techniques, which will be utilized in the production, processing, marketing, and distribution. Particular emphasis shall also be made on adoption and upgrading of post-harvest technology.
- c) *Production Support and Extension.* The DENR, DA, DTI, and the DOST, in coordination with the LGUs, NGOs, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), SUCs, and other relevant government agencies, shall establish programs which promote and provide adequate training on adapting technologies to individuals engaged in propagation, production, processing, marketing, and distribution of Philippine fiber, and strengthen farmers/producers/processors' cooperatives and organizations involved in the sustainable and viable development of Philippine fiber.
- d) *Market Promotion and Expansion of Trade.* The DTI, in coordination with

Private Industry Associations, shall link-up agribusiness cooperatives and organizations directly with consumers' cooperatives and organizations, agro-processing companies, or exporters to provide marketing outlets and assure relatively higher and stable prices of fiber. This also includes exploring national and international markets and facilitating the participation of local farmers, growers, and exporters in local and international conferences, trade fairs, expositions, and exhibit.

- e) *Infrastructure Development.* Access to post-harvest facilities as well as storage and distribution/transport facilities of existing government agencies shall be facilitated by the DENR, LGUs, and the DA.
- f) *Quality Assurance.* To ensure health and proper trading, the DTI and DOST shall establish and enforce standards in grading, sampling and inspection, tests and analysis, specifications, nomenclature, units of measurement, packaging, preservation, conservation, or transportation of Philippine fiber products and by products.
- g) *Philippine Fiber Information Center.* The DTI, in coordination with LGUs, shall establish a Philippine Fiber Information Center in areas where they are abundant.

Section 7. *Philippine Fiber Information Fund.* To provide for the funding requirements for the propagation, production, processing, marketing, promotion, and distribution of Philippine fibers, there is hereby created a Philippine Fiber Development Fund (PFDF), with an initial amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php 500,000,000.00) upon the approval of this Act and every year thereafter, to be provided by the Department of Budget and Management in the DOST-PTRI's budget. This is in addition to PTRI's existing allocation under the General Appropriations Act for the development of other fibers and its administrative, regulatory, and operational expenses.

For the succeeding years, for the next nine (9) years from the approval of this Act, a minimum amount of not less than five hundred million pesos (Php 500,000,000.00) annually shall be allocated for the development and sustainability of the Philippine fiber industry. The requirements of cooperating agencies shall be

incorporated in their respective budget from the General Appropriations fund.

Section 8. *The Council Secretariat.* The Council Secretariat shall be headed by the Director of the PTRI. The Secretariat and technical staff shall be detailed from their existing personnel without prejudice to the designation by the Council of such additional staff members as it may deem necessary for the proper discharge of its function and responsibilities.

Section 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Philippine Fiber Industry Development Coordinating Council shall formulate and prescribe the necessary implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Section 10. *Separability Clause.* If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 11. *Repealing Clause.* Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent or contrary to the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Approved,