

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6346



**Introduced by REP. REX GATCHALIAN and
REP. WILFRIDO MARK M. ENVERGA**

**AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 482 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Individualistic, unorganized, and fragmented – that is how the country's former Secretary of Agriculture described the state of our agriculture sector which has been on a steady slump for the last forty (40) years. Agriculture's share in the country's total gross domestic product (GDP) has now dropped from 14.1% in 2011, to 10% in 2021. This, despite the Philippines is still regarded as an agricultural country with arable land of up to 12.44 million hectares.

The dismal output of agriculture was not always the case for the country. In fact, in 1974, the Philippines already attained self-sufficiency in rice. And shortly thereafter in 1977, the country for the first time, became a net exporter of rice.

Appreciable impact on agriculture performance was felt in 1980s because of the political unrest, and in the 1990s, the environmental impacts of the El Niño phenomenon further negatively affected agricultural production. The last straw was the reorganization of the Ministry of Agriculture under Executive Order No. 116, s. of 1987 and its eventual decentralization under the Local Government Code of 1991 (LGC).

From previously being shepherded under one centralized national body, the responsibility to supervise and facilitate agricultural policy was devolved and passed on to Local Government Units (LGUs). Philippine agriculture slowly became

fragmented and with this fragmentation Philippine agriculture has failed to realize the benefits of economies of scale.

While the objectives of decentralization to bring the government closer to the people and give the local people the control and opportunity to participate in the planning and implementation of extension program are laudable, the experience of decentralization in agriculture this past 30 years is more than enough to prove that it has not worked out. The LGC has been criticized for not providing a mechanism for LGUs to have a functional relationship with the National Government, particularly the Department of Agriculture (DA).

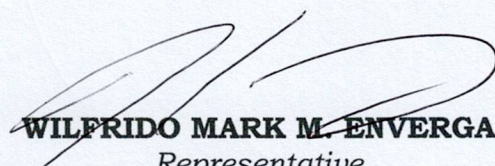
The DA has no institutional channel to work with LGUs on matters of agricultural policy, coordination, and partnership support. There is no authority to provide and see through a national policy direction that should help coordinate and monitor the implementation of agricultural programs in the country.

This bill seeks to centralize the agricultural goals of the country by giving the Secretary of Agriculture the power to choose the provincial, city, or municipal agriculturist from among three recommendees of the governor or mayor. By having a direct link to the provincial, city, and municipal agriculturists, the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to see through the National Agriculture Framework is strengthened. While agriculture will remain devolved, the national policy can be unified under one national agency. By streamlining and focusing our resources, we can take advantage of economies of scale and once again achieve self-sufficiency.

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



REX GATCHALIAN
Representative
1st District, Valenzuela City



WILFRIDO MARK M. ENVERGA
Representative
1st District, Quezon

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 482 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the
2 Local Government Code of 1991 is hereby amended to read as follows:

3
4 “SECTION 482. **APPOINTMENT**, *Qualifications, Powers, and Duties.* –

5 (a) **THE AGRICULTURIST SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE**
6 **SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FROM A LIST OF AT LEAST**
7 **THREE (3) RANKING ELIGIBLE RECOMMENDEES OF THE**
8 **GOVERNOR OR MAYOR, AS THE CASE MAY BE, SUBJECT TO**
9 **CIVIL SERVICE LAW, RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

10
11 **(B) THE AGRICULTURIST SHALL BE UNDER THE**
12 **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISION OF THE GOVERNOR OR MAYOR,**
13 **AS THE CASE MAY BE. THE AGRICULTURIST SHALL REPORT**
14 **REGULARLY TO THE GOVERNOR OR MAYOR AND THE**
15 **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ON THE AGRICULTURE AND**
16 **AQUACULTURE EFFORTS IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT.**

17
18 **(C)** No person shall be appointed agriculturist unless he is a citizen of
19 the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of
20 good moral character, a holder of a college degree in agriculture or any
21 related course from a recognized college or university and a first grade

1 civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have practiced his
2 profession in agriculture or acquired experience in a related field for at
3 least five (5) years in the case of the provincial or city agriculturist, and
4 three (3) years in the case of the municipal agriculturist.

5
6 The **APPOINTMENT** [position] of an agriculturist shall be
7 mandatory for [the] provincial, **CITY, AND MUNICIPAL** [government
8 and optional for the city and municipal] governments.

9
10 ~~(b)~~ (D) The agriculturist shall take charge of the office for
11 agricultural services and shall:

- 12
13 (1) Formulate measures for the approval of the sanggunian
14 and provide technical assistance and support to the
15 governor or mayor, as the case may be, in carrying out
16 said measures to ensure the delivery of basic services and
17 provision of adequate facilities relative to agricultural
18 services as provided for under Section 17 of this Code;
19
20 (2) Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof
21 by the governor or mayor, as the case may be, implement
22 the same, particularly those which have to do with
23 agricultural programs and projects which the governor or
24 mayor is empowered to implement and which the
25 sanggunian is empowered to provide for under this Code;
26
27 (3) In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the
28 agriculturist shall:
29
30 (i) Ensure that maximum assistance and access to
31 resources in the production, processing and
32 marketing of agricultural and aqua-cultural and
33 marine products are extended to farmers,
34 fishermen and local entrepreneurs;
35

- 1 (ii) Conduct or cause to be conducted location-specific
2 agricultural researches and assist in making
3 available the appropriate technology arising out of
4 and disseminating information on basic research
5 on crops, prevention and control of plant diseases
6 and pests, and other agricultural matters which
7 will maximize productivity;
8
- 9 (iii) Assist the governor or mayor, as the case may be,
10 in the establishment and extension services of
11 demonstration farms or aqua-culture and marine
12 products;
13
- 14 (iv) Enforce rules and regulations relating to
15 agriculture and aqua-culture;
16
- 17 (v) Coordinate with government agencies and
18 nongovernmental organizations which promote
19 agricultural productivity through appropriate
20 technology compatible with environmental
21 integrity;
22
- 23 (4) Be in the frontline of delivery of basic agricultural
24 services, particularly those needed for the survival of the
25 inhabitants during and in the aftermath of man-made
26 and natural disasters;
27
- 28 (5) Recommend to the sanggunian and advise the governor
29 or mayor, as the case may be, on all other matters related
30 to agriculture and aqua-culture which will improve the
31 livelihood and living conditions of the inhabitants; and
32
- 33 (6) **IN THE CASE OF PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURISTS,**
34 **EXERCISE TECHNICAL SUPERVISION OVER ALL**
35 **AGRICULTURAL OFFICES OF COMPONENT CITIES**
36 **AND MUNICIPALITIES.**

1
2 ~~(e)~~ **(E)** Exercise such other powers and perform such other
3 duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.
4

5 SEC. 2. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive
6 orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent
7 with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby modified, amended, or
8 repealed accordingly.
9

10 SEC. 3. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect immediately upon its
11 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
12

13 Approved,