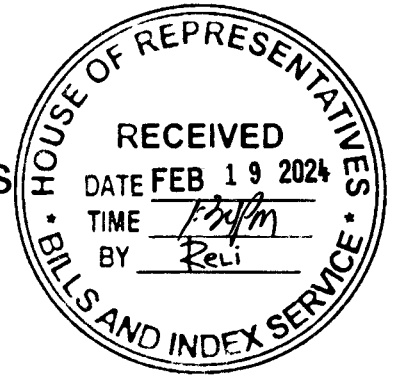




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Nineteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **9940**

Introduced by Representative Christian S. Unabia

EXPLANATORY NOTE

During President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr.'s 2023 State of the Nation Address, he stated that, *"Our aim is to boost our local agricultural production – through consolidation, modernization, mechanization, and improvement of value chains – augmented by timely and calibrated importation, as needed"*.

In line with the President's advocacy in agriculture, this bill seeks to strengthen the agricultural industry by creating positions for local agriculture extension workers in all local government units who will serve to improve farmers and fisherfolk's economic and social well-being.

The agriculture sector contributes to the country's gross domestic product (GDP), with an average contribution of about 11.43% annually. However, current analysis from the Mindanao Development Authority showed that the agriculture sector's contribution to the country's GDP declined from about 35% in 1986 to 9.6% in 2021 using the data from the Philippine Statistics Authority.

While agriculture remains crucial in reducing the country's poverty level, agricultural technicians that provide farmers and fisherfolk the necessary technical services in the field are limited to the city and municipal level only. Hence, this current gap scenario left more farmers and fisherfolk across barangays at the mercy of their own indigenous knowledge that oftentimes resulted to low income, productivity, and vulnerability of the country's food security to demand and supply shocks.

At present, the weak and fragmented agricultural service delivery operating within the Department of Agriculture and the local government units hampers the implementation of government agricultural development programs. One major challenge of this is the financial constraints of most barangays to hire the needed agricultural extension worker who will provide the necessary support to local farmers and fisherfolk.

To address the existing policy shortfall besetting the agriculture and fisheries sector, it is imperative to strengthen the agricultural industry by creating positions for local agriculture extension workers in all local government units. This bill will mandate the local barangays to hire agricultural extension workers with the support coming from the concerned provincial, city and municipal governments to improve the country's food security and sufficiency.

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


CHRISTIAN S. UNABIA



Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. **9940**

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1 **AN ACT**
2 **INSTITUTIONALIZING AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS**
3 **IN ALL BARANGAYS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**
4

5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines*
6 *in Congress assembled:*
7

8 SECTION 1. **Short Title.** – This act shall be known as the “*Barangay*
9 *Agricultural Extension Workers Act.*”

10 SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – In cognizance of the significant role of
11 agriculture sector in the development of economy, it is the policy of the State to
12 provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and
13 adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services, including
14 extension services. Towards this end, the State shall develop and deliver
15 effective agriculture and fishery production methods and practices based on the
16 needs of the communities through the agricultural extension workers.

1 SEC. 3. ***Barangay Agricultural Extension Worker.*** – There shall be at
2 least one (1) barangay agricultural extension worker (BAEW) in all barangays
3 with areas devoted to agricultural activities such as farming, raising of animals
4 and fishing, with salary grade equivalent to Agricultural Technician I or
5 Aquacultural Technician I under the existing Index of Occupational Services,
6 Position Titles and Salary Grades for Local Governments.

7 The BAEW shall serve as the focal person on agriculture and fishery in
8 the barangay level and assist in the implementation of agricultural programs and
9 projects of the barangay through the use of extension concepts and principles.

10 The *punong barangay* shall select and appoint the BAEW from the list of
11 accredited individuals provided by the local barangay agricultural and fishery
12 council, municipal agricultural and fishery council, or city agricultural and
13 fishery council. The *sangguniang barangay* shall determine the number of
14 BAEW that may serve in the barangay taking into consideration the size of
15 areas devoted to agricultural activities and the availability of funds of the
16 barangay.

17 Barangays without any farming or fishing activities may appoint a
18 BAEW who shall assist and encourage urban gardening in the barangay to
19 support community-based and household-based food production using rooftops,
20 small spaces and other vacant spaces.

21 SEC. 4. ***Accreditation and Qualifications.*** – The local barangay
22 agricultural and fishery council, municipal agricultural and fishery council, or

city agricultural and fishery council shall issue accreditation to individuals with the following qualifications:

- (a) A resident of the barangay where the BAEW may be assigned;
- (b) With background in farming or fishing or, in case of nonagricultural areas, urban gardening;
- (c) Able to read and write;
- (d) Computer literate;
- (e) At least a high school graduate;
- (f) Completed the local training program of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) of the Department of Agriculture (DA), or the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) related to agriculture and fishery; and
- (g) Has undergone training specific for BAEW by an ATI or TESDA-accredited training centers or institutions, and has passed the training assessment, and obtained the certification therefor.

The barangay agricultural fishery council or municipal agricultural fishery council shall also issue accreditation to all incumbent BAEW at the time of the effectivity of this Act. The incumbent BAEW shall continue to serve coterminously with the *punong barangay* or until properly replaced in accordance with Section 389 (b) (5) of Republic Act (RA) No. 7160, otherwise known as the “*Local Government Code of 1991*,” as amended.

SEC. 5. *Duties and Responsibilities.* – The BAEW shall:

1 (a) Gather data on the agriculture and fisheries production profile of the
2 barangay, incidence of pest and diseases, and other production-related
3 information, and report the same to the city agriculture officer or municipal
4 agriculture officer;

5 (b) Assist in the registration and updating of the barangay data in the
6 Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture of the DA;

7 (c) Assist in the implementation of agri-fisheries programs and projects
8 of the city or municipality, including the application and processing of
9 insurance offered by the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation;

10 (d) Provide technical assistance to farmers and fisherfolk on the
11 agriculture production trends, integrated pest management, and soil sample
12 collection for analysis;

13 (e) Administer technology demonstration, farmer field school (FFS)
14 activity, and other agricultural extension training programs related to farmer and
15 fisherfolk empowerment;

16 (f) Serve as the barangay agricultural help desk officer; and

17 (g) Submit monthly reports to the city agriculture officer or municipal
18 agriculture officer.

19 SEC. 6. ***Incentives and Benefits.*** – The BAEW is entitled to monthly
20 honorarium equivalent to the salary grade of Agricultural Technician I or
21 Aquacultural Technician I. The BAEW is also entitled to the following
22 benefits:

1 (a) *Transportation allowance.* – In the performance of official duties,
2 the BAEW is entitled to a transportation allowance of not less than One
3 thousand pesos (P1,000.00) per month, subject to auditing rules and regulations;

4 (b) *Cash gift.* – The BAEW is entitled to a cash gift equivalent to the
5 monthly honoraria every December;

6 (c) *Free legal services.* – The public attorney’s office shall provide legal
7 representation and consultation services to BAEWs in cases of coercion,
8 interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against the
9 BAEWs arising out of or in connection with the performance of duties; and

10 (d) *Training, education and career enrichment programs.* – The DA, in
11 coordination with the Technical Education Skills and Development Authority
12 (TESDA), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), state
13 universities colleges, other government departments, agencies and non-
14 government organizations, shall provide the following:

15 (1) Educational program that recognizes the years of service of
16 BAEW as credits to higher education institutions consistent with RA
17 10647, otherwise known as the “*Ladderized Education Act of 2014*”;

18 (2) Continuing education, study and exposure tours, trainings,
19 grants, field immersion, scholarships, and research and training;

20 (3) Special training programs on agriculture entrepreneurship such
21 as marketing and value chain approach, disaster response and
22 preparedness, and other programs that address emergent barangay

1 agricultural problems and issues; and

2 (4) Crash course on the following fields or subject areas:

3 (i) Communal irrigation system;

4 (ii) Climate-Smart agriculture;

5 (iii) Water management;

6 (iv) Development of climate-resilient crop varieties;

7 (v) Livestock development and management;

8 (vi) Coastal management and development of climate-resilient
9 fisheries;

10 (vii) Development of integrated multi-trophic aquaculture
11 systems;

12 (viii) Promotion of sustainable pasturing in livestock and
13 aquaculture feeding; and

14 (ix) Strengthening of early warning system.

15 SEC. 7. ***Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the implementation
16 of this Act shall be charged against the respective funds of the barangays, in
17 case of insufficiency, the city or municipality and province concerned shall
18 provide the necessary funds to hire the BAEW.

19 SEC. 8. ***Responsibilities of Agencies.*** – Within one (1) year from the
20 effectivity of this Act, the DA, ATI, and TESDA shall formulate, launch, and
21 institutionalize the training program, assessment, and national certification
22 program for the BAEW.

1 The DILG shall include the institutionalization of BAEW as one of the
2 indicators of the ‘Seal of Good Local Governance’ for cities, municipalities and
3 provinces.

4 **SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months
5 from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior
6 and Local Government and Chairperson of the TESDA Board shall, in
7 consultation with the LGUs, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for
8 the effective implementation of this Act.

9 **SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is
10 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not
11 affected shall remain in full force and effect.

12 **SEC. 11. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
13 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

14 Approved,