



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **1430**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ROMEO S. MOMO, SR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS REGIONAL OFFICE – BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) AND THE FIVE (5) NEW DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICES (DEOs), APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The creation of a Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Regional Office in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and the establishment of five (5) new District Engineering Offices (DEOs) are of great importance and benefit to the region.

Looking deep into the decentralization efforts of the government and its many attempts to empower local government units, now Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan of NEDA mentions that investments in key public goods, physical infrastructure, and human capital are major drivers of both the national growth rate and regional development patterns (Balisacan et. al. 2006).

Easing up infrastructure processes will balance the existing gap between internationally oriented infrastructure such as ports, harbors and associated facilities and the domestic transport networks and corridors. The focus on international connectivity inhibited a denser set of domestic connections from forming (Balisacan et. al. 2006). The team further suggest that, no major changes have occurred in Philippine economic geography over at least the past two decades and probably for longer. The ranking of regions by socio-economic indicators has changed relatively little: the regions with above-average indicators continue to be Manila and its surrounds, while the relatively poorer regions remain so. Most of the traditionally poor regions of western Mindanao have slipped further behind owing to the prolonged state of conflict and local mismanagement. This lack of improvement highlights

both the slow rate of national economic growth (rankings would be more likely to change with faster growth) and the absence of any major change in national policy settings, aside from the decentralization (Balisacan et. al. 2006).

The house bill is therefore specifically designed to address this crack in the system.

Moving on, in the provinces of Mindanao, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) performs a crucial role in the Philippines. The six (6) DEOs shall consist of five (5) new District Engineering Offices to be created, namely: (i) Sulu District Engineering Office (DEO); (ii) Tawi-Tawi DEO; (iii) Maguindanao del Norte DEO; (iv) Maguindanao del Sur DEO; and (v) Lanao del Sur DEO.

The DPWH RO-BARMM proposes to absorb the existing Isabela City District Engineering Office in the Province of Basilan. This proposed unit in the Bangsamoro region will be accountable for the planning, construction, maintenance, and development of public infrastructure initiatives in the region. It is anticipated that the DPWH RO-BARMM will ease the process and bring about positive consequences in terms of the following dimensions; First, the establishment of a DPWH Regional Office and new DEOs in BARMM gives the chance to improve infrastructure growth and road construction. With a dedicated regional agency and its associated district engineering offices, residents can anticipate more extensive road networks that address the requirements of both urban and rural areas, resulting in greater accessibility and immediate action.

Second, the establishment of a DPWH Regional Office and new DEOs in BARMM can create employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled employees. With infrastructure investments, construction projects, and maintenance in BARMM's provincial areas, DPWH's presence could generate income opportunities, promote economic development, and aid in alleviating regional poverty. This, in turn, can generate a multiplier effect, resulting in increased economic activity and further stimulating the regional development.

In addition, the formation of the DPWH Regional Office in BARMM and the creation of the DEOs will help resolve the region's infrastructure deficiencies, especially in rural areas. The establishment of five (5) new DEOs in BARMM can result in improved coordination of infrastructure projects, even in the most remote areas under BARMM's jurisdiction, without

the need to travel great distances to coordinate with regional offices. The DEOs of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) can assist in providing the residents of BARMM with an in-depth analysis of the region's infrastructure requirements, which are distinct from those of other Mindanao regions.

With a DEO in each province, the agency can provide efficient planning and timely project completion through targeted planning and assignment. By prioritizing the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, the Department of Public Works and Highways promotes inclusion and decreases disparities between urban and rural areas. This creates opportunities for agricultural growth, tourism, and other industries, thereby contributing to the region's overall economic development.

The significance of the creation of the DPWH Regional Office and DEOs in BARMM rests in its contribution to the region's economic and social development. By enhancing road infrastructure, the Department of Public Works and Highways facilitates the movement of people, products, and services, thereby increasing opportunities for trade, investment and tourism. It also improves access to essential services such as healthcare and education, thereby enhancing the quality of life in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao area.

The establishment of a DPWH Regional Office and DEOs in BARMM will bring numerous benefits, including a vastly enhanced infrastructure network for local residents. In addition to facilitating greater economic opportunities through infrastructure development, local employment, and convenience of access to essential services for socioeconomic development in the region, the general population will experience additional benefits.

In conclusion, the formation of a DPWH Regional Office in BARMM, as well as the installation of five (5) new DEOs, will play an important role in infrastructure development, economic and social advancement, and cultural integration in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

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

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ROMEO S. MOMO, SR.



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1430

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ROMEO S. MOMO, SR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

AN ACT

**CREATING A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS
REGIONAL OFFICE-BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN
MUSLIM MINDANAO AND FIVE NEW DISTRICT ENGINEERING
OFFICES THEREUNDER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** A Department of Public Works and Highways
2 Regional-Office Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
3 (DPWH RO-BARMM) is hereby created, to become the 17th Regional Office
4 of the DPWH and shall be located in Zamboanga City taking into
5 consideration its logistical location being in the center of the provinces
6 comprising the Bangsamoro Region.

7 **SEC. 2.** The DPWH RO-BARMM shall be composed of a Regional Office
8 and five (5) new District Engineering Offices (DEOs) to be created under its
9 jurisdiction, namely: Sulu DEO, Tawi-Tawi DEO, Maguindanao del Norte DEO,
10 Maguindanao del Sur DEO, and Lanao del Sur DEO.

11 **SEC. 3.** The Secretary of Public Works and Highways shall include in
12 the Department's program the operationalization of the DPWH RO-BARMM
13 and the DEOs thereunder the initial funding of which shall be included in the

14 annual General Appropriations Act.

15

16 **SEC. 4.** The DPWH RO-BARMM shall provide the overall supervision
17 and administration of the technical, financial, human resource, and
include the following:

1 (a) Plan, design, fund, implement, supervise, and oversee the construction
2 and maintenance of national roads, bridges, flood control systems, water
3 supply and other national public works and infrastructure projects in the
4 Bangsamoro Autonomous Region;

5 (b) Participate in the convening of the Intergovernmental Infrastructure
6 Development Board created by virtue of Article VI, Section 6, of Republic
7 Act No. 11054 or the “Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous
8 Region in Muslim Mindanao”, through the representation of the Regional
9 Director or any authorized official, and coordinate with the Ministry of
10 Public Works under the Bangsamoro Government in order to identify
11 the national infrastructure programs needed by the Bangsamoro
12 Autonomous Region; and

13 (c) Perform other technical, operational, administrative, and financial
14 functions in accordance with the existing functions of other regional
15 offices of the DPWH but not limited to those relevant to the national
16 infrastructure programs and projects in the Bangsamoro Region.

17 **SEC. 5.** The DPWH RO-BARMM shall provide the overall supervision
18 and administration of the technical, financial, human resource, and
19 administrative activities of the five (5) newly created DEOs, to include
20 the following:

21 (a) Plan, design, fund, and implement the construction and maintenance
22 of national roads, bridges, flood control system, water supply, and
23 other national public works and infrastructure projects in the
24 engineering district under its jurisdiction; and

25 (b) Perform other technical, operational, administrative, and financial
26 functions in accordance with the existing functions of other DEOs of
27 the DPWH, but not limited to those relevant to the national

28 infrastructure programs and projects in the Bangsamoro Region.

1 **SEC. 6.** The DPWH shall issue the necessary implementing rules and
2 regulations in accordance with the provision of this Act within ninety (90) days
3 from the effectivity hereof.

4 **SEC. 7.** Pursuant to the existing accounting and auditing rules,
5 regulations and policy of the National Government, the Department of Budget
6 and Management shall issue the corresponding agency codes for the DPWH
7 RO-BARMM and the five (5) new DEOs to allow them to program and procure
8 goods, services, and civil works necessary for the operation of the said offices.

9 **SEC. 8.** All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, proclamations,
10 rules and regulations, issuances, or any part thereof inconsistent with the
11 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

12 **SEC. 9.** Should any part or provision of this Act be held unconstitutional
13 or invalid, the other parts or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be
14 in full force and effect.

15 **SEC. 10.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
16 in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

