



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1458



Introduced by
HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO

**AN ACT PROVIDING AGRICULTURAL PENSION AND SOCIAL SECURITY
BENEFITS TO FARMERS AND FISHERFOLKS**

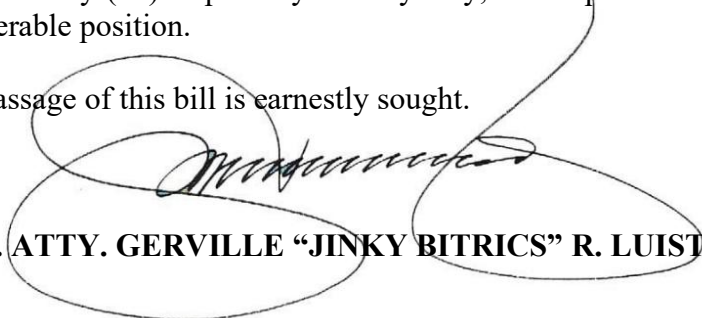
EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 2021, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) revealed that approximately one-quarter of the country's workforce is employed in agriculture. This reality highlights the critical importance of agriculture not just in food security, but as well as in economic stability. Despite this, the sector produced only 9 percent (9%) of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and the output remains low compared to other sectors.

The challenges mentioned above stemmed from the decline in population growth, shrinking farm size, and decreasing worker incomes. To mitigate this, the PIDS provided three pathways forward, one of which is improving credit access for farmers and fishermen. This could be achieved by adopting innovative financial services that effectively address their needs.

Further, Climate Change is another challenge that poses a risk to development as it impedes economic activities, disrupts agriculture, and damages infrastructure. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the Philippines experiences an average of twenty (20) tropical cyclones yearly, which positions our farmers and fisherfolks in a most vulnerable position.

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


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**AN ACT PROVIDING AGRICULTURAL PENSION AND SOCIAL SECURITY
BENEFITS TO FARMERS AND FISHERFOLKS**

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Agriculture Pension Act.”

SECTION 2 Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- (a) Establish, develop, and promote sound and viable social security schemes suitable to the needs of the people;
- (b) Strengthen the agriculture sector through sustainable efforts to end hunger, achieve food security, and improve the general health and nutrition of the Filipinos;
- (c) Protect and promote the welfare of farmers and fisherfolks through policies that would subsidize their socio-economic risks and vulnerabilities with the end view of improving their quality of life, and;
- (d) Provide and institutionalize a comprehensive pension and social security program for the benefit of agricultural workers

SECTION 3. Creation of the Farmers and Fisherfolk Social Security and Pension Program. - "The Farmers and Fisherfolk Social Security and Pension Program" herein referred to as the “Program," shall provide farmers and fisherfolks with a modest, dependable income security upon retirement. The Program shall consist of a comprehensive set of objectives, targets, and a holistic approach to providing sickness, maternity, disability, retirement, death, and funeral

benefits to farmers and fisherfolks. The said pension scheme shall be made consistent with the package benefits under the existing Social Security program of the Social Security System (SS) and relevant programs of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).

SECTION 4. Implementing Agencies. - The PCIC, an attached agency of the DA, and the SSS shall be the primary implementing agencies of the provision of this Act. To fulfill the goals of this Act, they shall perform the following duties and functions:

- (a) The PCIC shall manage the registration system of eligible agricultural workers under the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and provide necessary operational reports.
- (b) The SSS and PCIC shall tap the expertise of other relevant government offices to formulate the objectives, trends, and approaches under the Program.
- (c) The SSS shall manage the funds allocated and the social security and pension scheme of the Program and maintain the required actuarial and financial reports.
- (d) The PCIC and the SSS shall perform other duties and functions necessary for the efficient implementation of this Act.

The PCIC and the SSS shall collaborate with and secure the technical assistance of the DA in all stages of implementation of this Act. The DA shall ensure the objectives of the Program are met and shall evaluate and monitor the Program's contribution to the productivity of the agricultural sector and improvement of the quality of life of farmers and fisherfolks.

SECTION 5. Program Review. - The Program shall be reviewed every five (5) years to assess its effectiveness, sustainability, and relevance, to be conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) with support or participation by the abovementioned implementing agencies.

- a. The PCIC and SSS shall provide an annual report to the DA and the PIDS detailing the status and progress of the Program.
- b. A feedback mechanism shall be established to allow farmers and fisherfolks to convey their concerns, suggestions, and grievances regarding the Program.
- c. All the following information, feedback, and reports shall be provided to the PIDS in a timely manner to be used on the five-year review

SECTION 6. Appropriation - The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be drawn from the savings of the national government. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of the Program shall be sourced from ten percent (10%) of the total annual duties collected from the importation of agricultural products. The supplemental amount necessary for its implementation shall be included in the annual appropriations of the DA.

SECTION. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days from the date of effectivity of this Act, the PCIC shall, in consultation with the DA, SSS, the Department of Budget and Management, Department of Finance, and other relevant stakeholders, formulate the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SECTION. 8. Separability Clause. – Should any provisions or part thereof, is held invalid, or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION. 9. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION. 10. Effectivity. – this Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,