

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2179



Introduced by Representatives Richard I. Gomez, DPA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our country's pursuit of national progress and the enhancement of economic opportunities, including infrastructure development must align with the principles enshrined in the 1987 Constitution. This bill seeks to ensure that the constitutional mandates of promoting equitable economic growth, ensuring social justice, including the advancement of vital transportation networks, are undertaken while safeguarding our natural heritage.

The 1987 Constitution, across its various sections, highlights the importance of economic development while stressing the need to safeguard our natural resources and environment. In Article XII, Section 2, the Constitution articulates that the exploration, development, and utilization of natural resources should benefit the nation and its people without compromising the health of present and future generations. Furthermore, Article II, Section 16 recognizes the state's duty to protect and advance the people's right to a balanced and healthful ecology in harmony with nature.

This bill proposes introducing the deployment and use of advanced technology in our road widening projects through the utilization of earth balling machines. An earth balling machine is a mechanized apparatus specifically designed to relocate trees that obstruct road-widening efforts. The primary advantage of employing such machines is their ability to safely transplant trees and ensure their survival post transfer, thereby eliminating the need to fell these valuable components of our ecosystem.

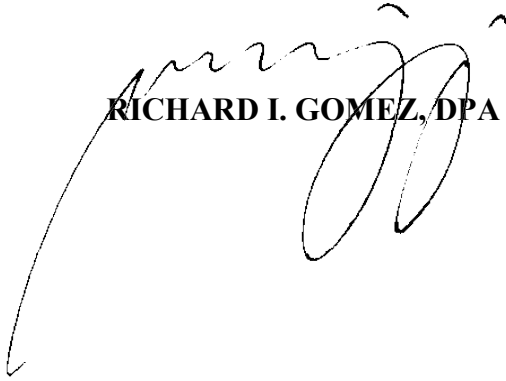
Earth balling involves carefully excavating a tree from its current location, preserving a substantial portion of its root system within a soil ball, and subsequently transplanting it to a new site. This method guarantees the survival and continued growth of the transplanted tree, thereby

maintaining the environmental balance and ecological integrity of the area. This process is essential as it allows for the simultaneous pursuit of infrastructure development and environmental sustainability.

Automating the earth-balling process is crucial due to its labor-intensive nature. Traditional manual transplantation requires a significant workforce and often leads to delays and increased costs. By integrating mechanization, we can enhance the efficiency of our road-widening projects while minimizing if not eliminating altogether adverse environmental impact.

This aims to align our road-widening initiatives with the principles of responsible economic development and environmental preservation. By harnessing the capabilities of a tree-balling machine, we can usher in a new era of infrastructure growth that harmoniously coexists with the natural world.

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



RICHARD I. GOMEZ, DPA

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AN ACT
TO MANDATE THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS TO
PROCURE AND UTILIZE EARTH BALLING MACHINES PER REGION IN THE
CONDUCT OF ROAD WIDENING AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS
AND APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Earth Balling Machinery Procurement* – The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is hereby mandated to procure, maintain, and utilize, at least one (1) set of machinery known as ‘earth balling equipment’ per region. This machinery shall be used exclusively to preserve and relocate trees affected by the department's road widening and other developmental projects, as may be evaluated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

SEC. 2. *Funding* – The initial budget required for the procurement of the earth balling machines shall be sourced from the DPWH's available funds.

Subsequent funding for the maintenance, operation, and additional earth balling machinery procurement shall be included in the regular budget of the DPWH in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – The Secretary of the DPWH and the

Secretary of the DENR shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations to ensure the proper implementation of this Act, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,