

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

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session**

House Bill No. 2707



BY REPRESENTATIVE REBECCA MARIA "MIA" A. YNARES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article II, Section 23 recognizes the value of non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations in promoting the welfare of the people. Further, Art. XIII, Section 15 of the Constitution states that people's organizations can be instrumental in enabling the people to meaningfully participate and effectively intervene in the formulation and implementation of decisions that directly affect their lives.

R.A. No. 7160 or The Local Government Code especially Article 62, Rule XIII of the Code's Implementing Rules and Regulations requires local government units to promote the establishment and operation on non-governmental organizations, peoples' organizations, and the private sector to make them active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy, and to directly involve them in the planning and implementation of programs and projects in the LGUs. (Paragraph 1.1, DILG CM No. 2021-54) In addition, Paragraph 1.2 of the same Memorandum Circular recognizes the important role of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in government processes as: "a vehicle of empowering citizens by giving them opportunities to articulate their needs and to take part in the decision-making processes of their respective LGUs. An active CSO participation is vital in the pursuit of a more participatory and responsive governance."

People empowerment is essential to nation building and to spur development in local communities. The national government and the local government units should empower their citizens by providing them opportunities to articulate their needs and to ensure that they take part in different areas of governance and decisions that affect their lives. In this connection, a mechanism for an active civil society organization (CSO) and partnership with people's organizations should be created to ensure that the views and opinions of the citizens in different areas of governance may be heard and considered so a more participatory and responsive governance can be achieved. (DILG MC No. 2021-054)


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House Bill No. **2707**

BY REPRESENTATIVE REBECCA MARIA “MIA” A. YNARES

AN ACT

**CREATING A SYSTEM OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A PEOPLE'S COUNCIL IN EVERY LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, PRESCRIBING
ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS AND PROVIDING FOR ITS PARTICIPATION IN
THE LOCAL SANGGUNIAN AND LOCAL BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMITTEES,
TASK FORCES OR SIMILAR WORK GROUPS**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Civil Society
2 Organizations Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to ensure
4 participation of citizens in all avenues of local governance. Likewise, the State acknowledges
5 the value of creating a mechanism where its citizens’ views and opinions in different areas of
6 governance may be heard and considered. Furthermore, pursuant to Article II, Section 23 of
7 the Constitution, the State recognizes the value of non-government, community-based, or
8 sectoral organizations in nation building and in creating an avenue to ensure their growth and
9 development. The State also recognizes that the partnership with people's organizations (POs)
10 and civil society organizations (CSOs) will spur development in local communities as
11 envisioned by the Local Government Code of 1991.

12 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act:

13 (a) *Civil society organization* refers to any organized citizens’ group including POs and
14 non-government organizations such as community groups, labor unions, indigenous
15 groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional
16 associations, and foundations;

- 1 (b) *Local sanggunian* refers to the local legislative body specifically the *Sangguniang*
2 *Panlungsod* for cities, and the *Sangguniang Bayan* for municipalities;
- 3 (c) *Non-government organization* refers to an independent private and non-profit
4 organization formed primarily to promote social and economic development with
5 none of its officers or members occupying an elective position;
- 6 (d) *People's council* refers to a body composed of representatives of registered or
7 accredited CSOs and POs which shall be created in every city or municipality and
8 provincial levels as mandated in Section 8 of this Act; and
- 9 (e) *People's organization* refers to a *bona fide* cooperative or association of citizens
10 organized for purposes not contrary to law, with demonstrated capacity to promote
11 the public interest and with identifiable leadership, membership, and structure
12 whose officers and members do not occupy any elective government position.

13 **SEC. 4. Accreditation of CSOs.** – To be duly recognized and allowed to participate in
14 local governance, a CSO shall have actively operated for at least one (1) year in the city or
15 municipality where majority of its members reside, and must apply for accreditation with the
16 local *sanggunian*. An application for accreditation shall be approved by the local *sanggunian*,
17 upon submission of the following requirements:

- 18 (a) Proof of existence and operation in the respective city or municipality it is applying
19 in for at least one (1) year prior to the application for registration;
- 20 (b) Proof of activities held in pursuit of developmental objectives or of organizational
21 activities conducted;
- 22 (c) Program of activities planned for the year following the date of application for
23 registration;
- 24 (d) Copies of its Constitution, By-laws and/or Articles of Incorporation;
- 25 (e) Lists of its officers and members of good standing and their respective addresses;
- 26 (f) Financial Statement and Declaration of Assets and Liabilities; and
- 27 (g) Board Resolution manifesting a decision to register and participate under this Act.

28 A CSO whose application for accreditation has been approved shall be issued a
29 certificate containing the terms and conditions for accreditation.

30 A local *sanggunian*, however, may from time to time, and in consultation with the
31 organized People's Council, impose such other requirements and conditions for registration as
32 it may deem appropriate to best adhere to the principles of this Act.

33 Any CSO already accredited by a local government prior to the effectivity of this Act
34 need not register for purposes of this Act, unless its accreditation has in the meantime been
35 withdrawn.

36 **SEC. 5. Accreditation Deemed Inactive.** – An accredited CSO shall submit, by January
37 31 of every year, a list of accomplishments of the previous year and its plans for the current
38 year. The failure to submit these requirements for two (2) consecutive years shall render the

1 CSO's accreditation inactive and thus disqualifies the CSO from availing of the rights and
2 privileges thus vested upon registration mandated in Section 7 of this Act.

3 A CSO may apply for the reactivation of its accreditation after submitting the required
4 list of accomplishments and plans for the current year.

5 **SEC. 6. Committee for the Accreditation of CSOs.** – There shall be a Committee for
6 the Accreditation of CSOs in all provincial, city and municipal *sanggunians*. It shall perform
7 the following functions:

- 8 (a) Receive, evaluate and process applications for registration;
- 9 (b) Monitor compliance with the conditions for accreditation; and
- 10 (c) Initiate legislative measures for the effective performance of its tasks.

11 The People's Council created under Section 8 hereof, once formally organized, shall be
12 entitled to a two (2)-seat representation in the Committee.

13 **SEC. 7. Rights and Privileges of Accredited CSOs.** – An accredited CSO shall enjoy
14 the following rights and privileges:

- 15 (a) Enter into joint ventures and other cooperative undertakings with the local
16 government to engage in the delivery of certain basic services, capability-building
17 and livelihood projects;
- 18 (b) Develop local enterprises designed to improve productivity and income, diversify
19 agriculture, spur rural industrialization, promote ecological balance, and enhance
20 the economic and social well-being of the people within the framework of equitable
21 and sustainable development;
- 22 (c) Receive assistance from the local government for economic, socially-oriented,
23 environmental, good governance, or cultural projects to be implemented within
24 their territorial jurisdiction; and
- 25 (d) Automatic membership in the People's Council.

26 **SEC. 8. Creation of People's Councils.** – A People's Council composed of accredited
27 CSOs shall be created in each local government unit (LGU). For this purpose, the Committee
28 for the Accreditation of CSOs of each local *sanggunian* shall, not later than ninety (90) days
29 from the effectivity of this Act, call for a convention of all accredited CSOs to facilitate the
30 formal organization of the People's Council.

31 **SEC. 9. Structure and Rules of the People's Council.** – Each People's Council shall
32 determine its own organizational structure and internal rules, but shall at all times provide for
33 adequate consultation mechanisms for purposes of obtaining the views and suggestions of all
34 political parties or movements, government employees' organizations, other non-accredited but
35 legitimate CSOs, and accredited CSOs which are not members of the People's Council:
36 *Provided, That* no political party, government employees' organization or non-registered CSOs
37 may be nominated by the Council for membership in the LGUs special bodies nor granted the
38 rights and privileges of accredited CSOs under this Act: *Provided, further, That* no provision
39 herein shall be interpreted to prohibit the Council from changing its name or from being
40 organized for purposes other than those indicated in this Act.

1 **SEC. 10. Recognition of the People's Council by the Local Sanggunian.** – Only one
2 (1) People's Council shall be recognized by each local *sanggunian*. Each local *sanggunian* is
3 hereby mandated to issue a certificate of recognition for the People's Council within thirty (30)
4 days from the filing of a petition for recognition and shall pass a *Sanggunian* Resolution
5 embodying the rights and privileges of the recognized People's Council.

6 **SEC. 11. Withdrawal of Recognition of the People's Council.** – A local *sanggunian*
7 can withdraw the recognition granted to a People's Council only upon action of a petitioner,
8 and based on the following grounds:

9 (a) That the People's Council allowed itself or any of its member organizations to
10 engage primarily in, or to be used primarily for, partisan political activities; and

11 (b) Other grounds to be provided for in the rules and regulations to be issued to
12 implement this Act.

13 The local *sanggunian* shall not recognize internal or inter-organizational conflicts
14 within the People's Council.

15 **SEC. 12. Powers and Responsibilities of the People's Council.** – Upon recognition,
16 the People's Council may, in accordance with its policies and internal rules, exercise the
17 following powers and responsibilities:

18 (a) Elect or appoint, from among its member organizations, its representatives to all
19 local government bodies, boards, councils, committees, task forces special
20 government bodies and other similar work groups which the local government or
21 national laws may hereinafter create. Member organizations elected or appointed to
22 represent the people's Council shall have the sole prerogative to choose, from
23 among their bona fide members, the persons who shall represent the People's
24 Council in the respective boards, councils, committees, task forces or special
25 bodies. Unless otherwise provided herein, such representatives shall not exceed
26 twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership of the board, council, committee, task
27 force or special body;

28 (b) Participate in the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of government
29 activities: *Provided*, That these functions shall be exercised without compensation
30 or remuneration. The concerned local government shall, however, provide for the
31 necessary office spaces, facilities and equipment for the use of the People's Council;
32

33 (c) Observe, and participate in the deliberation, conceptualization, implementation and
34 evaluation of projects, activities and programs of the LGU, propose legislation and
35 participate at the committee level of the local *sanggunian*; and
36

37 (d) Elect a representative to the provincial People's Council.

38 **SEC. 13. Creation of a Provincial People's Council (PPC).** – A PPC shall be created
39 and recognized by the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* and shall be composed of all representatives
40 from the municipal and city People's Councils within a province's jurisdiction.

1 The PPC shall elect, from within its ranks, a representative who shall sit as a member
2 of the *Sanggunian Panlalawigan* and shall exercise the duties and powers of a Provincial Board
3 member.

4 **SEC. 14. *Non-Partisan Nature of the People's Council.*** – The People's Council shall
5 not engage in, or allow itself or its member organizations to be used for purposes of partisan
6 politics and shall adopt such measures to ensure that it is adequately shielded from any political
7 partisanship or influence.

8 As used in this Act, partisan politics shall refer to any activity, statement, or
9 manifestation which solely or primarily serves to campaign for or against any particular
10 political party or any candidate for any elective public office.

11 **SEC. 15. *Right to Self-Organization.*** – Pursuant to Article XIII, Section 15 of the
12 Constitution, all CSOs are recognized as independent and autonomous self-help organizations.
13 They are encouraged to organize into formal cooperatives, labor unions, interest groups, non-
14 government organizations, sectoral organizations and people's organizations in furtherance of
15 their constitutionally mandated role of enabling the people to pursue and protect, within
16 democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through
17 peaceful and lawful means.

18 Furthermore, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and all
19 LGUs are mandated to assist and support efforts of the people towards self-organization to
20 address common concerns, and to promote common welfare and interests.

21 **SEC. 16. *Information Boards and Suggestion Boxes.*** – Information boards and
22 suggestion boxes shall be provided, maintained and controlled solely by each barangay, to be
23 strategically situated in public plazas, government buildings and offices, public markets,
24 schools, and at such public places accessible to the people, which boards and boxes shall be
25 used other than those maintained by the barangays and the national government for other
26 purposes.

27 LGUs are mandated to respond within fifteen (15) working days to the suggestions filed
28 by citizens in suggestion boxes.

29 **SEC. 17. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act
30 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

31 **SEC. 18. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within one hundred twenty (120)
32 days from the effectivity of this Act, the DILG and LGUs shall, in consultation with accredited
33 CSOs who have previously engaged in concerned undertakings with local governments,
34 determine effective ways and methods to ensure the success of the objectives of this Act and
35 craft the rules and regulations to implement it.

36 **SEC. 19. *Sunset Review.*** – Five (5) years from the effectivity of this Act, Congress
37 shall review and recommend amendments thereto, after evaluating the problems and issues in
38 its implementation.

39 **SEC. 20. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
40 unconstitutional, the other provisions, not affected thereby, shall remain valid and subsisting.

1 **SEC. 21. *Repealing Clause.*** – All other laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
2 proclamations and administrative regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this
3 Act are hereby amended, modified, superseded, or repealed accordingly.

4 **SEC. 22. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
5 in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,