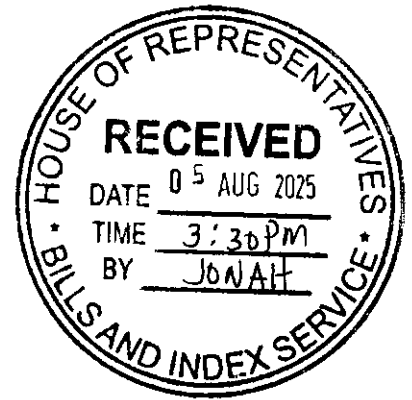


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3109



Introduced by Representative CHING BERNOS

AN ACT

**ESTABLISHING THE NORTH LUZON DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DEFINING
ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The regions of Northern Luzon—comprising the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Ilocos Region, and Cagayan Valley—are endowed with abundant natural resources, cultural richness, and human capital. Despite this, the area continues to face developmental disparities, limited infrastructure, and fragmented governance. For decades, local economies have suffered from outmigration, underinvestment, and a lack of unified planning that can fully unlock the area's potential.


Past administrations recognized these gaps by creating the North Luzon Growth Quadrangle initiative, later renamed the North Luzon Growth Quadrangle Area and Northern Luzon Economic Development Committee. However, the abolition of these mechanisms without establishing a long-term successor has left Northern Luzon without a coherent, institutionalized development framework.

This bill seeks to institutionalize the Northern Luzon Development Authority (NLDA) as a long-term, inter-regional coordinating body that will spearhead and harmonize development across Northern Luzon. By integrating efforts in infrastructure, industry, tourism, agriculture, education, digitalization, and peacebuilding, the NLDA will serve as a catalyst for inclusive, balanced, and

sustainable growth. It will operate in close collaboration with local governments, national agencies, the private sector, and civil society.

The proposed Authority will not duplicate existing mandates, but rather bridge gaps, align development initiatives, and ensure regional equity in national planning. It aims to turn Northern Luzon into a hub of opportunity—one that empowers its people to thrive where they are.

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



REP. CHING BERNOS
SOLID NORTH Party-List

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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 “Northern Luzon
2 Development Authority Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Principles and Policies.** It is hereby declared a policy of the
4 State to hasten the socioeconomic development of the provinces and cities of Ilocos
5 Region, Cagayan Valley Region and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR),
6 increasing trade, tourism and investments; encouraging private enterprise; generate
7 jobs, develop infrastructures and advancing efforts towards peace and expansion.
8 Towards this end, the State shall promote sustainable development by building a
9 globally competitive and ecology conscious community of self-reliant and highly
10 efficient people. The State shall likewise formulate and implement a framework to
11 enhance the capabilities of the people where they are given equitable access to local
12 resources, basic social services and economic opportunities. It shall ensure the
13 implementation, management and oversight of the necessary measures and
14 programs and an effective institutional mechanism to be established to address the
15 need for a coordinated and integrated approach in the formulation and

1 implementation of various inter-regional development plans, programs and projects
2 in Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and the Cordillera Administrative Region
3 (CAR).

4 **SEC. 3. Northern Luzon Development Authority.** There is hereby created the
5 Northern Luzon Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as the Authority, to
6 be headed by a Chairperson appointed by the President. It shall be organized within
7 one hundred twenty (120) days after the approval of this Act. The Authority shall
8 promote, coordinate and facilitate the active and extensive participation of all sectors
9 to facilitate the socioeconomic development of the Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley
10 Region and the CAR. It shall be responsible in close cooperation with the local
11 government units (LGUs) and line agencies for the overall policy direction and
12 coordination of the efforts of the authority, execute the powers and functions herein
13 vested.

14 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** The Authority covers all the provinces and cities of Ilocos Region,
15 Cagayan Valley Region and the CAR.

16 **SEC. 5. Principal Office and Term.** The Authority shall have its main office in San
17 Fernando City, La Union in the Ilocos Region. In order to achieve the objectives of
18 this Act, satellite management offices may be established in Tuguegarao, Cagayan
19 for Cagayan Valley Region and Baguio City for CAR and such other satellite offices
20 as the Authority may establish taking into consideration the accessibility of their
21 offices to the public. The Authority shall also have a term of fifty (50) years from the
22 effectivity of this Act and renewable for the same period unless otherwise provided
23 by law.

24 **SEC. 6. Powers and Functions of the Authority.** The Authority shall exercise the
25 following powers and functions:

- 26 a) Formulate an integrated development framework for Ilocos Region, Cagayan
27 Valley Region and CAR that is consistent with the peace and development
28 initiatives of the National Government;
- 29 b) Review and submit to the President, for approval, a master plan for the
30 Authority;
- 31 c) Cause the update, periodic review refinement and endorsement of the
32 Authority plans, investment programs and development activities within the
33 context of the master plan of the component regions;

- 1 d) Transform regions in the Authority into highly developed and sustainable
2 centers of agriculture, natural resources, commerce, education, tourism,
3 banking, investment and finance, information and communications
4 technology (ICT) knowledge-based industries and other appropriate industries
5 of the region;
- 6 e) Recommend to and, whenever necessary, call upon the proper agencies on the
7 technical support, physical assistance and, generally, the level of priority to
8 be accorded to agricultural, industrial, commercial, infrastructure,
9 environmental, and technological programs and projects soliciting or requiring
10 direct or indirect help from or through the National Government or any of its
11 instrumentalities;
- 12 f) Educate and inform the constituents of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region
13 and CAR, about national policies that foster the integrated and balanced
14 development of the area to encourage their full participation;
- 15 g) Promote and facilitate investments in any field which enhance the
16 socioeconomic development of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR
17 and uplift the living standards of the people and their socio-political activities
18 in close coordination with agencies primarily mandated to undertake such
19 functions;
- 20 h) Explore sources for financing priority for inter-regional programs, projects and
21 activities of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR that encourage
22 economic and social development through programs, projects and activities;
- 23 i) Coordinate and facilitate the extension of necessary planning, management
24 and technical assistance to prospective and existing investors, complementary
25 and in support of agencies primarily mandated to execute such functions;
- 26 j) Establish a comprehensive and integrated database in Ilocos Region, Cagayan
27 Valley Region and CAR needed for planning and decision-making;
- 28 k) Monitor, evaluate and formulate recommendations in the implementation of
29 specific Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR inter-regional
30 development programs, activities and projects.
- 31 l) Provide strategic direction for Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR;
- 32 m) Establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the timely implementation of
33 specific Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR inter-regional projects,
34 whenever necessary, as far as practicable, including public-private
35 partnership;

- 1 n) Review and recommend for approval by the Department of Economy,
2 Planning, and Development (DEPDEV) Board such specific Ilocos Region,
3 Cagayan Valley Region and CAR inter-regional programs, projects, and plans
4 by the National Government and donor agencies subject to existing laws, rules
5 and regulations;
- 6 o) Receive and administer donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts, in
7 cash or in kind, from foreign governments, international agencies, private
8 entities and other sources, including Official Development Assistance (ODA),
9 to be used in the development of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and
10 CAR, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;
- 11 p) Integrate, prioritize program and implement, whenever allowed and
12 authorized by applicable laws with impact on Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley
13 Region and CAR inter-regional and region-specific programs, activities and
14 projects including ODA projects, subject to such limitations prescribed by
15 existing laws, rules and regulations;
- 16 q) To sue and be sued, enter into contracts, acquire, purchase, hold, lease,
17 transfer, dispose of property of any kind or nature to carry out the purposes
18 to this Act; and
- 19 r) Discharge other functions that may be deemed necessary or as may be
20 provided by law.

21 The Authority, through its Chairperson, shall submit to the President and both
22 Houses of Congress annual reports on its accomplishments and activities.

23 **SEC. 7. Commitment to Tourism Development.** The Authority shall adopt and
24 promote tourism as a central pillar of regional development, recognizing its potential
25 to generate employment, stimulate local enterprise, preserve cultural heritage, and
26 foster inclusive economic growth across the northern provinces. In line with this, the
27 Authority shall work closely with the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Tourism
28 Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), local government units
29 (LGUs), indigenous communities, private stakeholders, and civil society
30 organizations to strengthen and harmonize tourism development efforts within the
31 region.

32 The Authority shall prioritize the identification, preservation, and promotion of
33 key tourism assets, including but not limited to heritage towns, natural parks,
34 ecotourism areas, cultural landscapes, and coastal and mountain destinations. It

1 shall support the development of sustainable tourism circuits and assist LGUs in
2 crafting local tourism development plans that align with the regional and national
3 tourism framework.

4 Furthermore, the Authority shall facilitate investment in critical tourism
5 infrastructure such as access roads, accommodations, transport terminals, and
6 visitor centers, while promoting the use of digital tools and innovations to enhance
7 the tourist experience. Special attention shall be given to capacity-building programs
8 that empower local tourism workers, community-based tourism groups, and small-
9 scale enterprises, particularly those led by women, youth, and indigenous peoples.

10 All tourism initiatives under the Authority shall be guided by principles of
11 sustainability, cultural sensitivity, climate resilience, and equitable benefit-sharing
12 to ensure that tourism growth uplifts local communities and protects the
13 environmental and cultural assets of Northern Luzon for future generations.

14 **SEC. 8. Chairperson.** The Chairperson is the head of the Authority who shall be
15 appointed by the President of the Philippines with a Cabinet rank. The Chairperson
16 shall serve a term of six (6) years from the date of the appointment unless removed
17 for a cause. No person shall be appointed as Chairperson unless the person is a
18 holder of a degree in law or a master degree in any of the following fields: economics,
19 business, public administration, law, management or their equivalent and with at
20 least ten (10) years relevant experience in these fields. The Chairperson must be a
21 resident of any of the provinces of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region or CAR for
22 at least (5) years before the appointment.

23 **SEC. 9. Duties and Functions.** The Chairperson shall exercise the following duties
24 and functions:

- 25 a) Call and preside over meetings of the Board of Directors, hereinafter referred
26 to as the Board, and see to it that the policies, programs, rules and regulations
27 are implemented properly;
- 28 b) Involve experts in the fields of development in the formulation and
29 implementation of a comprehensive and integrated development plan for
30 Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR, investment programs and the
31 preparation of investment programming priorities, annual reports and other
32 pertinent documents approved by the Authority;

- 1 c) Identify solutions to key issues and concerns, taking into account related
2 risks, affected parties and impact, in coordination with the Board and key
3 stakeholders;
- 4 d) Advocate the work of the Authority among the various concerned sectors and
5 stakeholders;
- 6 e) Call on any agency, group, individual member of the Board, local government
7 unit, and host community to address issues and concerns relating to
8 implementation of major programs, projects and activities;
- 9 f) Supervise the monitoring and timely implementation of specific Ilocos Region,
10 Cagayan Valley Region and CAR interregional programs, projects and
11 activities;
- 12 g) Endorse to the Board all policy recommendations, plans and programs for
13 approval;
- 14 h) Represent the Board in regular and special cabinet meetings;
- 15 i) Accept, on behalf of the Authority, donations, contributions, grants and
16 bequests or gifts, in cash or in kind, from members, foreign governments,
17 international agencies, private entities or any individual to realize the
18 functions of the Authority;
- 19 j) Supervise administrative operations including disbursement of any fund of
20 the Authority, subject to the usual accounting and auditing procedures, and
21 submit reports thereon;
- 22 k) Execute and administer the policies and measures approved by the Board;
- 23 l) Appoint all employees of the Authority, and remove, dismiss or otherwise
24 discipline for cause, such employees in accordance with the standard
25 guidelines for recruitment, employment, and discipline in the civil service
26 rules;
- 27 m) Represent the Authority in all dealings with other offices, agencies, and
28 instrumentalities of the government and with all persons and entities, public
29 or private;
- 30 n) Sign agreements or contracts on behalf of the Authority, including those for
31 expert and consultancy services and other reports of accountabilities
32 emanating from the Authority; and
- 33 o) Perform such other functions that the Board may direct to carry out the
34 provisions of this Act.

1 **SEC. 10. Executive Director.** An Executive Director shall be appointed by the
2 President of the Philippines upon recommendation by the Chairperson. No person
3 shall be appointed as Executive Director unless the appointee is a holder of a degree
4 in any of the following fields: economics, business, public administration, law,
5 management or their equivalent and with at least five (5) years relevant experience
6 in these fields. The appointee must be a resident of any place in Ilocos Region,
7 Cagayan Valley Region and CAR for at least five (5) years prior to the appointment
8 and must be eligible for third level career service position pursuant to the career
9 executive rank system

10 The Executive Director shall assist the Chairperson in carrying out the functions
11 of the Authority and shall, likewise, serve as the Secretary of the Board.

12 **SEC. 11. Board of Directors.** The Authority's overall directions and thrusts shall be
13 provided and approved, unless provided otherwise in this Act, by the Board
14 composed of the following members:

- 15 a) The Chairperson;
- 16 b) The heads of the Regional Development Councils of Ilocos Region, Cagayan
17 Valley Region and Cordillera Administrative Region;
- 18 c) Governors of the Provinces in Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR;
- 19 d) Chapter Presidents of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines in Ilocos
20 Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR;
- 21 e) Mayors of Cities in Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR; and
- 22 f) The three (3) representatives from the i) business sector; ii) academic sector;
23 and iii) nongovernment organization (NGO) sector to be appointed by the
24 President, upon the recommendation of the Board comprising one (1)
25 representative each from the Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR:

26 The three (3) representatives from the private sector shall serve for a term of six
27 (6) years. At the initial appointment of such members, the second member to be
28 appointed shall only serve a term of four (4) years and the third member to be
29 appointed shall only serve a term of two (2) years. They shall continue to hold office
30 until their successors shall have been appointed. All vacancies, prior to the
31 expiration of the term, shall be filled for the unexpired term only.

32 **SEC. 12. Duties and Functions.** The Board shall exercise the following functions:

- 1 a) Provide direction and guidance for the Authority's work and thrusts for Ilocos
2 Region, Cagayan Valley Region and CAR;
- 3 b) Ensure that the goals and policies of the Authority are consistent with the
4 overall national development goals and objectives;
- 5 c) Ensure that the programs of the Authority are consistent with regional and
6 local development plans, programs and projects and vice versa for purposes
7 of harmonization;
- 8 d) Explore sources for financing of priority specific Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley
9 Region and CAR interregional plans, programs, projects and activities;
- 10 e) Create committees or task forces as may be deemed necessary in the
11 accomplishment of duties and functions;
- 12 f) Determine schedules, establish voting procedures, criteria for the constitution
13 of a quorum and other rules and regulations in the conduct of Board inter-
14 regional meetings; and
- 15 g) Perform such functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this
16 Act.

17 **SEC. 13. Executive Committee.** The Board shall constitute an Executive
18 Committee, hereinafter referred to as the ExeCom, from among its membership to
19 act, for and on its behalf when the Board is not in session, on urgent matters as may
20 be deemed necessary by the Chairperson. To ensure interregional representation and
21 participation, the following comprise the ExeCom:

- 22 a) The Chairperson;
- 23 b) The heads of the Regional Development Councils of Ilocos Region, Cagayan
24 Valley Region and Cordillera Administrative Region;
- 25 c) Representative from the business sector in the Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley
26 Region and CAR business sector; and
- 27 d) Representative from the civil society organizations in the Ilocos Region,
28 Cagayan Valley Region and CAR.

29 **SEC. 14. Organizational Structure.** The Chairperson shall determine the
30 organizational structure, staffing pattern and pay scales of the Authority personnel
31 subject to existing civil service and compensation laws. The Chairperson may
32 reorganize the Authority and may create or abolish divisions, units or branches
33 therein as the exigencies of the affairs of the Authority may require.

1 **SEC. 15. Merit System.** All officials and employees of the Authority shall be selected
2 and appointed on the basis of merit and fitness in accordance with civil service law,
3 rules and regulations. The recruitment, transfer, promotion, and dismissal of all its
4 personnel including temporary workers shall be governed by a merit system that is
5 established by the Authority in compliance with existing laws, rules and regulations.

6 **SEC. 16. Appropriations.** The amount necessary to finance the initial
7 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations
8 of the Regional Development Councils of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley Region and
9 Cordillera Administrative Region. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its operation
10 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

11 **SEC. 17. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within sixty (60) days after the
12 approval of this Act, the Authority shall adopt rules and regulations to implement
13 the provisions of this Act.

14 **SEC. 18. Separability Clause.** If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
15 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected
16 shall remain valid and subsisting.

17 **SEC. 19. Repealing Clause.** Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
18 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or
19 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended
20 accordingly.

21 **SEC. 20. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
22 publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

23 Approved,