

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3123**



Introduced by Representative JB BERNOS

AN ACT
PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAMBOO INDUSTRY BY
STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE BAMBOO INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL, CREATING THE BAMBOO INDUSTRY RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT CENTER, PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR BAMBOO
PLANTATION DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The bamboo plant, abundant in many parts of the Philippines, is a resilient, renewable, and versatile material with immense economic, environmental, and social potential. From furniture and construction to crafts and charcoal, bamboo provides livelihood opportunities for rural communities and plays a critical role in reducing poverty, promoting sustainability, and mitigating climate change. Recognizing these benefits, the Philippine government issued Executive Order No. 879, s. 2010, which mandated the use of bamboo for furniture and fixtures of government offices and created the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council (PBIDC).

Of particular note is the province of Abra, which has long recognized the economic and cultural significance of bamboo. Under the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program, bamboo—*kawayan*—has been identified as the province's flagship product. Abra's municipalities, especially in upland and rural areas, are engaged in the propagation, processing, and craftsmanship of bamboo products that have become sources of local livelihood.

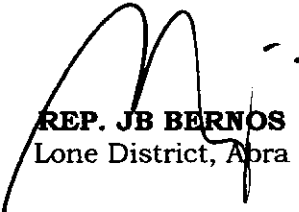
The province also celebrates the Kawayan Festival every March, a vibrant cultural and economic event that showcases Abra's bamboo-based industries, promotes innovation in bamboo design, and encourages youth and community

engagement in bamboo sustainability. This festival is both a celebration of indigenous craftsmanship and a testament to the province's commitment to developing bamboo as a vehicle for economic empowerment.

Despite such initiatives, bamboo producers nationwide—including those in Abra—continue to face challenges: lack of support infrastructure, limited access to markets, absence of mechanization, and weak policy coordination. This bill seeks to address these gaps through the following key reforms:

This bill, therefore, seeks to institutionalize and strengthen the country's bamboo industry through a comprehensive national program. By enacting this measure, we harness the full potential of bamboo not only as a green economic driver and an eco-friendly substitute for wood and plastic, but also as a key solution in our national strategy toward climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and rural industrialization.

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



REP. JB BERNOS
Lone District, Abra

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Act.*”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to promote and support industries that generate employment especially in the rural areas, reduce poverty, foster a sustainable environment, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

It shall also be the policy of the State to foster a self-reliant and independent economy that supports indigenous, scientific and technological capabilities, and skills. To this end, the State shall recognize the strategic importance of bamboo as a sturdy, versatile, and replenishable material that can be a sustainable source of livelihood and catalyst for agricultural productivity.

The State shall likewise ensure the integrated and continuous development of the Philippine bamboo industry through policies and programs that encourage the planting of bamboo, accelerate the development of bamboo-based products and designs, and promote Philippine bamboo products in international markets. It shall establish a program for sustainable utilization, propagation, and promotion of bamboo as furniture, food, construction and design material, and for other uses.

SEC. 3. The Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Program. – The Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, shall formulate the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Program (the Program) which shall include plans of actions and projects for the scientific propagation, development and management, processing, utilization, business development, and commercialization of Philippine bamboo and bamboo products, through cooperation among stakeholders including producers, processors, marketers, service providers, national agencies, and local government units (LGUs).

SEC. 4. Objectives of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Program. – The Program shall aim to make the Philippine bamboo industry competitive in the local and global markets and provide opportunities for local employment and the establishment of bamboo-based community enterprises. The Program shall:

- (a) Ensure that the bamboo industry has sufficient quality raw materials through the establishment and management of bamboo nurseries and plantations;
- (b) Ensure that the bamboo industry continuously receives from the research and development sector information about relevant technologies and new products;
- (c) Ensure that the industry receives pertinent and accurate data from the PBIDC upon which the industry can make business decisions;
- (d) Promote investment in the bamboo industry by providing substantial incentives to investors and encouraging the establishment of bamboo plantations and bamboo processing operations;
- (e) Provide skilled labor and manpower through continuous relevant capacity building;
- (f) Provide continuous training and capacity building in bamboo plantation operations, bamboo processing, and product development and design;
- (g) Ensure provision of locally manufactured machines of improved capacity and quality at competitive costs;
- (h) Ensure markets of bamboo products locally and globally; and
- (i) Ensure sustainable resources for implementing the bamboo industry development 3 program.

SEC. 5. Role of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council. – The Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council, created under Executive Order No. 879, series of 2010, hereinafter referred to as the Council, shall provide the

overall policy and program directions of various agencies and instrumentalities to ensure the implementation of the Program. The Council shall be administratively attached to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and shall be composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as Chairperson;
- (b) Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);
- (c) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA);
- (d) Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd);
- (e) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST);
- (f) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- (g) Executive Director of the Bamboo Industry Research and Development Center;
- (h) Chairperson of the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples;
- (i) National President of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines;
- (j) Executive Director of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines;
- (k) Two (2) Representatives from Non-Government Organizations;
- (l) One Representative from a reputable private industry association; and
- (m) One Representative each from the Bamboo Farmers, the Bamboo Manufacturers, and the 26 Bamboo Processors' Associations.

The Council shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the attainment of the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 6. Bamboo Industry Research and Development Center. – A Center is hereby created as the Council's secretariat. Headed by an Executive Director, the Center shall have functions such as research and development, trade promotion, education, linkages, and administration. It may accept grants, partner with stakeholders, and coordinate programs aligned with the bamboo industry roadmap.

The organizational structure, staffing pattern and compensation schedule of the Center shall be prepared in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations. Other member agencies of the Council shall provide additional administrative and technical staff support to the Center upon the determination by the Council of the necessity for such augmentation.

The Center shall perform the following powers and functions:

- (a) Promote and encourage the establishment and management of bamboo nurseries, plantations and processing facilities that would accelerate the production and commercialization of bamboo and various bamboo products;
- (b) Promote the commercialization and market access of appropriate, innovative and viable bamboo industry development technologies and products;
- (c) Monitor and evaluate the performance of bamboo industry development programs and projects;
- (d) Coordinate and partner with other government agencies in the implementation of bamboo industry development programs and projects;
- (e) Coordinate and partner with the private sector, people's organizations and 19 non-governmental organizations, and the academe in providing assistance on matters pertaining to bamboo industry development;
- (f) Accept grants, donations and contributions from local and international donors and such similar sources of funds for the implementation of the provisions of this Act, subject to the usual budget, accounting and auditing rules and regulations;
- (g) Conduct capability-building initiatives for farmers, processors, designers, and other stakeholders in the bamboo industry;
- (h) Conduct research and development in partnership with appropriate government agencies to advance sustainable bamboo industry development practices;
- (i) Supervise the implementation of the plans and programs of the Council;
- (j) Manage and administer the projects identified by the Council;
- (k) Conduct, in cooperation or partnership with appropriate government agencies, a periodic review of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Roadmap; and
- (l) Submit periodic reports to the Council on the progress and accomplishment of programs and projects

SEC. 7. Executive Director. – The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Center with the approval of the Council. The Executive Director shall be a citizen and resident of the Philippines and must possess executive and management experience of at least three (3) years, and considerable knowledge about the bamboo industry.

In addition, the Executive Director shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Oversee the day-to-day operations of the Center;
- (b) Provide technical and administrative support to the Council;
- (c) Assist the Council in the performance of its tasks; and
- (d) Perform such other functions, duties and responsibilities as may be necessary to implement this Act.

SEC. 8. Support from LGUs. – Local government units are encouraged to create their own Bamboo Industry Development Councils and to develop bamboo enterprises, with provincial programs to be set up within two (2) years.

SEC. 9. Incentives. – Investors in bamboo plantation shall enjoy benefits including:

- (a) Exemption from the payment of rent for the use of government lands for commercial bamboo plantation for the first five (5) years of operation reckoned from the date of the first harvest of the plantation;
- (b) In the case of private plantations, exemption from the requirement to secure a cutting permit for the harvesting of bamboo and a transport permit for as long as the plantation is registered with the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of the DENR: Provided, That the plantation owner shall inform the CENRO about the date of harvest, and the estimated volume of the harvest. Inventory of the plantation prior to harvest shall not be required. All CENROs shall approve and enter into a registry, the names of private bamboo plantation investors;
- (c) Exemption from the payment of forest charges and other fees for taxes that local 35 government units may impose;
- (d) Access to development loans from public financial institutions for plantation developers;
- (e) Insurance coverage of plantations and plantation development equipment by the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation;
- (f) Tax free importation of plantation development equipment, including tree nursery facilities, pursuant to Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA);
- (g) To claim expenses incurred for plantation operations as deductible expenses for income tax purposes, subject to the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended: Provided, That the deduction shall only apply to the taxable period when the expenses were incurred;

- (h) To claim as ordinary and necessary expenses or as capital expenditure expenses incurred in the development and operation of a bamboo plantation prior to the initial commercial harvest;
- (i) Prioritized access for plantation developers to credit assistance from government-owned, -controlled or -supported financial institutions;
- (j) Acceptance of plantation as collateral for loans in government-owned-or-controlled banks;
- (k) In the case of a tenured developer, entitlement to fair compensation upon the premature termination of the agreement at no fault of the holder: Provided, That all depreciable permanent and semi-permanent improvements such as roads, buildings, and nurseries including the planted and standing trees and other forest crops introduced and retained in the area, shall be properly evaluated: Provided, further, That the amount of compensation shall be mutually agreed upon by both the Department and the tenure holder: Provided, finally, That in case of disagreement between them, the matter shall be submitted to arbitration by a mutually acceptable and impartial third party adjudicator;
- (l) No volume restriction in the exportation of bamboo culms from plantation;
- (m) Tax free importation of processing equipment by processors engaged in bamboo industry, pursuant to the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA); and
- (n) Inclusion in the annual investment program of the National Economic Development Authority of industrial bamboo plantations in forest lands and priority access to funds from external and internal sources.

SEC. 10. Appropriations. – The funds necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's budget of the DTI. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DTI and the Council shall, in coordination with the DENR, and DOST promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SEC. 12. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act or part hereof is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 13. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive and administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 14. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,