

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 3721



Introduced by Representative

BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE NEGOSYO CENTERS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10644, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE "GO NEGOSYO ACT"**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to significantly bolster the role of Negosyo Centers, which are pivotal in supporting the Philippines' Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The proposed legislation aims to amend the existing "Go Negosyo Act" (Republic Act No. 10644) by expanding the centers' functions and ensuring they have the necessary personnel and resources to be more effective.

At its core, the bill proposes to expand the responsibilities of Negosyo Centers to provide more holistic support for MSMEs. This includes a more explicit mandate to facilitate all aspects of business registration, from permits to licenses. It also seeks to officially institutionalize the "Mentor Me Program", a successful initiative that provides coaching and guidance to entrepreneurs. The bill also emphasizes specialized support for key groups by encouraging youth and women entrepreneurship and helping businesses access crucial financial assistance and grants. A new requirement for the centers is to create a centralized databank for research and policy studies, along with a feedback mechanism to better understand and respond to the needs of local businesses.

Beyond expanding their roles, the bill addresses the need for a stable and skilled workforce. It mandates the institutionalization of Business Counsellors as permanent employees of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) within three years. This crucial provision aims to professionalize the role, ensuring that MSMEs receive consistent, high-quality advisory services from experienced personnel.

Perhaps the most innovative aspect of the bill is the designation of certain Negosyo Centers as Rural Export Centers. This new function is designed to empower rural businesses to compete in the global market. These specialized centers would provide tailored services such as in-depth market research for international opportunities, strategic planning for exports, and support for participating in global trade shows. To complement this, the bill calls for the creation of a dedicated website to showcase successful rural export businesses and serve as a platform for promotion and networking.

In essence, this proposed law represents a comprehensive effort to transform Negosyo Centers from basic assistance hubs into powerful engines of economic growth. By enhancing their functions, professionalizing their staff, and creating a new pathway for rural businesses to export, the bill aims to strengthen the country's MSME sector and, in turn, the national economy.

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


HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA
Representative
FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List

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

SECTION 1. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 10644 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 4. Functions of the Negosyo Centers. – Negosyo Centers shall

have the following functions:

(a) x x x

(b) x x x

(c) Accept and facilitate all registration application FOR BUSINESS PERMITS,
LICENSES, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS of MSMEs;

(d) x x x

(e) x x x

(f) x x x

(g) x x x

(h) x x x

(i) x x x

(j) x x x

(K) INSTITUTIONALIZE THE CONDUCT OF THE MENTOR ME PROGRAM, A JOINT UNDERTAKING OF THE DTI WITH THE PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AIMED AT COACHING THE MENTEE - MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES ON THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS;

(L) Build local support networks and establish market linkages for MSME development;

(M) Coordinate with schools and organizations on the development of youth entrepreneurship program;

(N) Encourage women entrepreneurship by giving women access to information, support, training and credit facilities;

(O) Facilitate access to grants and other forms of financial assistance, shared service facilities and equipment, and other support for MSMEs;

(P) Ensure management guidance, assistance and improvement of the working conditions of MSMEs;

(Q) Establish a databank which shall be a source of all information necessary for project monitoring, research and policy studies and informal dissemination campaigns;

(R) Map out all information and services essential to prospective entrepreneurs and prospective investors especially in key value chains and economic subsectors within its jurisdiction;

(S) Establish a feedback mechanism among the MSMEs in the respective jurisdiction of Negosyo Centers; [and]

(T) Conduct other programs or projects for entrepreneurial development in the country aligned with the MSMEs development plan; AND

(U) “IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AIMED AT PROVIDING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES TO RURAL BUSINESSES RELATED TO THE MARKETING AND EXPORTING OF THEIR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS FOR NEGOSYO CENTERS LOCATED OUTSIDE HIGHLY URBANIZED CITIES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS.”

SECTION 2. A new section is hereby inserted after Section 4 of the same Act and numbered as Section 4-A, to read as follows:

“SEC. 4-A. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF BUSINESS COUNSELLORS. – WITHIN THREE (3) YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE BUSINESS COUNSELLORS WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO PROVIDE BUSINESS REGISTRATION ASSISTANCE, BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICES, AND BUSINESS INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY TO MSMEs IN THE NEGOSYO CENTERS SHALL BE INSTITUTIONALIZED AND BE MADE ORGANIC EMPLOYEES OF THE DTI, SUBJECT TO THE EXISTING ORGANIZATION AND COMPENSATION LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS, AND EVALUATION AND APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT.”

SECTION 3. A new section is hereby inserted after Section 8 of the same Act and numbered as Section 8-A, to read as follows:

“SEC. 8-A. NEGOSYO CENTERS AS RURAL EXPORT CENTERS. – (a) NEGOSYO CENTERS DESIGNATED AS RURAL EXPORT CENTERS BY THE MSMED COUNCIL SHALL:

(1) PROVIDE IN-DEPTH, CUSTOMIZED, AND ACTIONABLE MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES THAT A BUSINESS MAY OPT INTO BASED ON NEED, AND ARE:

(i) FOCUSED ON ACTIONABLE AND MEASURABLE RESULTS FOR A BUSINESS;

(ii) BUSINESS- AND PRODUCT- OR SERVICE-SPECIFIC;

(iii) TARGETED TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS;

(iv) BASED ON HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INCLUDING DATA FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, AND SIMILAR ENTITIES; AND

(v) BASED ON MARKET RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, AND REPUTABLE NON-GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS;

(2) CONDUCT STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROVIDE EXPORT SUPPORT SERVICES FOR RURAL BUSINESSES AS NEEDED;

(3) SUPPORT RURAL BUSINESSES FOR POTENTIAL INCLUSION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOWS AND TRADE MISSIONS; AND

(4) SERVE AS ONE-STOP SHOPS FOR RURAL BUSINESSES TO COMMUNICATE AND MAKE CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS RELATED TO THE CONDUCT OF EXPORT BUSINESS.

“(b) THE MSMED COUNCIL SHALL SET UP AND MAINTAIN A WEBSITE WHICH SHALL:

(1) BEST PRACTICES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF BUSINESSES BEGINNING TO EVALUATE EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES;

(2) SHOWCASE THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OF SUCCESSFUL RURAL EXPORT BUSINESSES;

(3) PROVIDE FOR A PLATFORM WHERE RURAL EXPORT BUSINESSES MAY PARTICIPATE IN ORDER TO LAUNCH, PROMOTE, AND ADVERTISE THEIR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES; AND

(4) PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION OF ALL EXISTING RURAL EXPORT CENTERS.”

SECTION 4. The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year’s appropriations of the DTI. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 5. Within ninety (90) days from its approval, the DTI shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 6. If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. All laws, decrees, proclamations, issuances or ordinances that are contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Poe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA

Representative

FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List