

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4079**



Introduced by **Rep. ANGELO MARCOS BARBA**
2nd District, Ilocos Norte

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed Philippine Corn Research Institute Act of 2025 establishes the Philippine Corn Research Institute (PhilCorn), a corporate body under the Department of Agriculture (DA), to modernize the corn industry, strengthen research and development, and improve the livelihood of small and resource-poor farmers.

This bill seeks to lead nationwide programs on corn breeding, biotechnology, mechanization, pest management, sustainable and climate-resilient farming, value-adding, and policy support, while conserving traditional varieties and promoting hybrid and engineered strains.

Further, this proposed legislation establishes a national farmer-centered program to revitalize the corn industry through integrated research, training, and extension services. Moreover, this measure seeks to expand rural employment through diversified corn-based enterprises and value-added processing, achieved through mandatory strategic partnerships between government agencies, such as the DA, the Department of Science and Technology, and their partnership and collaboration with state universities and colleges (SUCs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and the private sector, to ensure effective implementation.

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



ANGELO MARCOS BARBA

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE CORN
RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREOF

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “**Philippine Corn Research Institute Act.**”

SECTION 2. *Philippine Corn Research Institute.* - The Philippine Corn Research Institute, hereinafter referred to as PhilCorn, is hereby established as a body corporate attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA), to modernize the corn industry and thus improve the livelihood of corn farmers in the rainfed, upland, and dry land farming communities, and to enable them in coping with low crop yields arising from frequent droughts, flood, global warming, soil degradation, rising food and fuel prices, and other risks due to disruptions of international trade, as well as environmental and climate changes.

SECTION 3. *Objectives.* - The objectives and goals of this Act are as follows:

- (a) To develop and implement a strong, dynamic, and innovative farmer-centered and need-based national corn research for development (R4D), training, and extension programs;
- (b) To strengthen the national capacity for corn research and extension, modernize production and utilization, as well as industrial processing of corn and corn-based crops, diversify crop harvests through sequential planting to sustain soil health and fertility, and thus,

enhance higher and sustained farm productivity and household income;

- (c) To improve the livelihood and economic conditions of small-scale and resource-poor farmers who are growing corn after rice under irrigated and rainfed conditions, as well as those in upland and dry land farming ecosystems;
- (d) To work closely with regulatory agencies, such as the Bureau of Plant Industry-National Seed Quality Control Laboratory (BPI-NSQCL), Quarantine Division, and the National Seed Industry Council (NSIC); the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS); the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR); private stakeholders, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the collection, conservation, and utilization of endemic or traditional corn varieties, as well as in the experimentation, planting, and monitoring of corn hybrids and genetically modified organism (GMO) varieties;
- (e) To develop and implement sustainable and environment-friendly corn and corn-based farming systems in the vulnerable and marginal areas like hillsides and sloping terrains and determine those areas where crops other than corn may be more appropriate to grow and propagate;
- (f) To gather and provide reliable and up-to-date data to guide policy makers with regard to corn improvement and development, import and export volumes, and develop strong linkages among stakeholders in promoting the national corn industry;
- (g) To expand employment opportunities through corn and corn-based farming systems in the rural areas, and ultimately promote the general welfare of corn farmers through higher efficiency and profitability in production and industrial products development, processing, and marketing;
- (h) To initiate and undertake such other related programs in partnership and in consultation with the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the DA regional integrated agricultural research centers (DA-RIARCs), the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic Resources, Forestry, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD), State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), and the private sector; and

- (i) To provide guidance and support to entrepreneurs, cooperatives, and NGOs that produce or process corn for food and industrial purposes, utilize corn for animal feeds, and undertake value-adding for commercial purposes.

SECTION 4. *Duties and Functions.* - The PhilCorn shall exercise the following duties and functions:

- (a) Plan, unify, strengthen, fund, conduct, monitor, and evaluate all regional and national corn research, development, and technology promotion in different scientific and technological fields and programs;
- (b) Undertake the following eight (8) major thrusts that will increase and sustain productivity of corn and corn-based farming systems, namely: (1) Germplasm collection, conservation, breeding, and biotechnology activities; (2) Natural resources management, watershed conservation, drought adaptation and mitigation; (3) Corn engineering and farm mechanization, and postharvest management; (4) Pest surveillance, early warning system, integrated pest management, and biological control methods; (5) Socio-economics, technology impact assessment, and policy advocacy; (6) Seed production and dissemination, technology packing and demonstration, promotion and deployment, training and communication; (7) Processing and industrial-chemical products development; and (8) Corn-based farming systems, farm management improvement, and experiment station development;
- (c) Lead and coordinate a national network of corn and corn-based farming systems research and extension agencies, centers, and stations located in the different agro-ecological regions of the country where corn is a major crop;
- (d) Develop technologies suitable for the rainfed, upland, and dry land agro-ecosystems that will maximize the productivity and quality of locally grown corn and corn-based crops while also reducing production costs and ensuring long-term and sustainable corn and corn-based production systems through genetic improvement, environmental resources management, and soil health and water conservation measures;
- (e) Enhance and diversify the income of corn farmers by developing suitable corn-based crops through crop rotation where applicable; value-adding corn technologies through processing, packaging, and marketing; and promotion of economically viable technologies and

entrepreneurial skills, giving emphasis on aspects necessary for group endeavors of small-scale farmers, cooperatives, and seed growers;

- (f) Develop databases needed in the identification and preparation of necessary policy recommendations towards efficient, highly productive, and competitive corn industry and corn-based farming systems through appropriate socio-economic measures and public-private sector mobilization and participation;
- (g) Organize and develop strong training and strategic communication programs for corn and corn-based farming systems scientists, research managers, and extension specialists to enable them to undertake effective and timely technology promotion of packaged technologies among clusters of farmers and corporate growers by utilizing modern extension systems, such as information, education, and communication (IEC), technologies, and participatory social mobilization procedures; and
- (h) Publish and disseminate research and extension findings and recommendations through scientific journals, books, technical and extension bulletins, videos, and other print and communication channels.

SECTION 6. *Corporate Powers.* - The PhilCorn shall exercise the following corporate powers:

- (a) Exercise all the powers of a corporation under the general corporation law, in so far as such powers are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act;
- (b) Enter into, make, and execute contracts and agreements of any kind or nature, and to sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- (c) Borrow funds and obtain loans from all sources, whether local or foreign and whether government or private, to help finance its research programs and its capital and operating expenditures, or support to farmers' entrepreneurial activities;
- (d) Invest in, purchase, or otherwise acquire, own, lease, mortgage, pledge, sell, assign, convey, exchange, encumber, borrow, or otherwise deal in real and/or personal properties of whatever kind and nature, or any interest therein, including shares of stocks, bonds, notes, securities, and other evidence of indebtedness of natural or juridical persons,

whether domestic or foreign, and whether government or private;

- (e) Receive and acquire from any person, government, and private entities, whether domestic or foreign, or from any corporation, partnership, association, or other entity such characters, licenses, franchises, rights, privileges, concessions, assistance, grants, donations, loans, and contributions consisting of such properties, real or personal, including funds and valuable effects, as may be useful, necessary, or proper to finance its research, capital, and operating expenditures, or otherwise carry out its purposes and objectives, and to administer the same in accordance with the terms and agreement consistent with its purpose and objectives; and
- (f) Acquire from the government, whether national or local or from any person, corporation, partnership, association, or other entity, such characters, franchises, rights, privileges, assistance, financial or otherwise and concessions as may be conducive to and necessary or proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of PhilCorn.

SECTION 7. *Board of Trustees.* - The Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall exercise all the corporate functions and powers of PhilCorn and shall control through policy enactment all its businesses, activities, and properties relevant to the goals and functions of the Institute.

- (a) The Board shall be composed of the Secretary of Agriculture or his designate as *ex-officio* Chairperson and fourteen (14) members from the following agencies and sectors: Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquaculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) who will act as Co-Chairperson; Director of the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) who will act as Vice-Chairperson; Regional Executive Director (RED) representing the DA Regional Field Offices (DA-RFOs); Undersecretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM); Director of the Policy Formulation and Planning Division of the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev); Director of the DA-Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (DA-PCAF); two (2) University Presidents from the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) representing major corn producing and corn-based agriculture regions; four (4) private sector representatives, namely: one (1) each from among the national outstanding corn farmers, farmers' organizations or federations, private companies engaged in corn research and seed production, and President of the livestock/poultry industry, and two

- (2) distinguished scientists, one each from the public and private sectors. The credentials of nominees to represent the private sectors shall be evaluated and scrutinized by competent *ex-officio* members of the Board and selection shall be strictly in accordance with the guidelines prepared and approved by the Board.
- (b) The terms of office of the members of the Board who are heads or officials from their respective agencies or institutions shall be *co-terminus* with their respective appointments: *Provided, however,* That the terms of the office of the Regional Executive Director who represents the DA-RFOs where corn is a major crop and the four (4) private sector representatives shall be for five (5) years without prejudice to reappointment for another 5 years based on merits and excellent performance in the Board. All government officials on the Board shall serve as *ex-officio* members and their terms shall terminate immediately upon completion of their terms as officials of the agencies they represent. The Executive Director of PhilCorn shall serve as Secretary of the Board.
- (c) The Chairperson and members of the Board shall not receive any salary or compensation but shall receive *per diem*, as the Board may determine, for each Board meeting actually attended: *Provided, however,* That such members shall also be entitled to reimbursable transportation and representation allowances in going to and coming from Board meetings and in transacting official businesses for the Institute: *Provided, further,* That *per diem* and representation allowances shall be the amount allowed by the DBM.
- (d) The Board shall meet regularly at least once (1) every quarter or as often as the exigencies of the service demands. The presence of the Chairperson or the Co-Chairperson and at least seven (7) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum and the majority vote of the members present, there being a quorum, shall be necessary for the adoption of any resolution, policy, rule, regulation, decision, or any other act of the Board.
- (e) Any vacancy on the membership of the Board shall be filled up within two (2) months of the date a post is vacated. No person with a conflict of interest shall be appointed as a member of the Board.

SECTION 8. Powers and Functions of the Board. - The PhilCorn shall exercise the following powers and functions:

- (a) To adopt by-laws and promulgate policies, rules, regulations, and procedures for the efficient and effective operations of the Institute;
- (b) To define and guide in the formulation of the vision, mission, strategy, and research extension priorities, general plans and programs, and guidelines or manuals for the proper operation and management of PhilCorn in accordance with its purposes and objectives and in line with research planning and monitoring policies and procedures of DOST-PCAARRD and DA-BAR;
- (c) To approve the PhilCorn's organizational structure and staffing pattern, operation and capital expenditures, and financial budget prepared in accordance with its corporate plans;
- (d) To approve the plantilla and salary ranges, benefits, privileges, bonuses, scholarship and human resource development, housing facilities and support to staff, and other terms and conditions of service, including promotion systems similar to those in the DOST and SUCs, as well as life and medical insurances, and retirement schemes or benefits for all officers and employees of the PhilCorn, upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- (e) To appoint, promote, transfer, suspend, remove, or otherwise discipline any subordinate officer or employee of PhilCorn, upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- (f) To create such committee or committees and appoint the members thereof, as may be necessary and proper for the management of the PhilCorn for the attainment of its purposes and objectives; and
- (g) To exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other acts as may be necessary or proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of the PhilCorn.

SECTION 9. *Executive Director and Other Officers.* - The PhilCorn shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees (BOT), based on the findings and recommendations of a Search Committee duly organized and commissioned by the Board for such purpose.

- (a) The Executive Director shall have a PhD degree in research with at least ten (10) years of meritorious experiences, preferably in corn research;

extensive scientific publications in referred journals; and proven administrative and managerial abilities; corrupt-free, both in organizing and motivating highly productive colleagues, as well as in generating financial resources.

- (b) The Executive Director shall serve for a term of five (5) years, but subject to a one (1) term extension of 5 years for very meritorious performance, or a maximum total of ten (10) years without further extension for any reason whatsoever; *Provided, however,* That there shall be a reserved plantilla position of the same salary rate for the outgoing Executive Director, if he was previously a holder of a plantilla position at PhilCorn and shall not yet be of retirement age at the end of his term as Executive Director: *Provided, further,* That the Board of Trustees, through a duly organized Search Committee, shall have chosen a new Executive Director who shall immediately assume office during a turn-over ceremony at the expiration date of the term of office of the outgoing Executive Director.
- (c) The Executive Director shall be assisted by three (3) Deputy Executive Directors, namely: Deputy Executive Director for Research and Development; Deputy Executive Director for Technology Promotion, Information, and Partnership; and Deputy Executive Director for Administration and Finance; and Division Heads and Branch Stations Directors as the Board may determine to carry out the purposes and objectives of PhilCorn.

SECTION 10. Powers, Functions, and Duties of the Executive Director. - The Executive Director shall be directly responsible to the Board of Trustees and shall have the following powers, duties, and functions:

- (a) To exercise dynamic leadership, create a vision map on the mission, provide strategic direction, and undertake systematic supervision over the planning and implementation of all research, development, technology sharing programs, training and extension, upgrading of scientists and staff of PhilCorn and its network, and in general, administer and direct the management and operation in a transparent and corrupt-free administration of PhilCorn;
- (b) To execute all contracts, incur obligations, acquire and dispose of assets, and deliver documents on behalf of PhilCorn within the framework of the authority delegated by the Board;

- (c) To implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules, and regulations that are promulgated or adopted by the Board;
- (d) To arrange for the conduct of an External Program and Management Review (EPMR) by a Panel of Experts every five (5) years or as often as necessary to organize and understand the output, outcome, and impact of PhilCorn programs to the farmers and stakeholders of the corn industry and to provide guidance to management in charting the future thrusts of PhilCorn;
- (e) To exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other duties as may be authorized, assigned, or delegated by the Board.

SECTION 11. *Technical Advisory Committee.* - A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), organized by the Executive Director and approved by the Board, shall assist the Executive Director, the Division heads, and Branch Station Directors in pursuing interagency activities, on technical concerns, and participation of the national research, development, and extension (RD&E) network. The TAC shall be composed of not more than nine (9) members, or as the Board may determine, who are heads, representatives, or scientists and experts of agencies, government or private, that are actively involved in any major aspect of corn research, corn-based farming systems, seed quality certification, production and processing, marketing and consumption, policy advocacy, capacity building, training and extension, and strategic communication. TAC members may be assigned to assist specific programs, divisions, or branch stations as the services may be needed in achieving the goals and objectives of PhilCorn.

SECTION 12. *Services of Government Personnel.* - The PhilCorn may, for the purpose of its research, development, training, extension, and information activities, obtain and secure the services of scholars and scientists, as well as specialists in research, training, extension, products development, and communications of any unit, experiment station, institute or center of the DA, University of Southern Mindanao, Central Mindanao University, Visayas State University, University of the Philippines Los Baños, Mariano Marcos State University, Isabela State University, Central Luzon State University, and other agencies and universities of the national government and foreign institutions. These personnel of national and international reputations, from public or private institutions, shall be designated as visiting scientists and research fellows for a term of one (1) year to five (5) years to assist in conducting major research problems of strategic importance and consequences in pursuing the goals and objectives of the

PhilCorn. The selected experts may be paid such honoraria or incentives acceptable to all concerned and as may be fixed and authorized by the Board.

SECTION 13. *Buildings, Facilities, and Equipment.* - The PhilCorn is hereby authorized to own, acquire, borrow, lease, plan, and construct or repair buildings, laboratories, experimental farms, and other facilities as may be necessary or proper to attain its purposes and objectives. The Institute may also utilize facilities and experimental land of any unit of any cooperating SUC, the DA, and of the national government that is engaged, directly or indirectly, in activities that relate to agriculture, farming systems, corn production, or product development of the corn industry.

- (a) The PhilCorn is further authorized to purchase equipment, materials, and articles, either locally or abroad, as may be necessary or proper to carry out its powers and functions and attain its purposes and objectives. The Institute shall be exempted from the payment of all forms of taxes, duties, fees, and charges on any and all such importation of equipment, materials, articles, and services: *Provided, however,* That the same are not available locally on favorable terms.
- (b) PhilCorn shall be authorized to expropriate lands for corn and corn-based farming systems research and development purposes provided that just compensation shall be paid to the owners of the land. If the land belongs to the government or is inalienable, the Institute shall be granted automatic title to the land.
- (c) Likewise, all lands, farms, plantations, whether directly or indirectly owned, used, utilized, or administered by the PhilCorn, and those that it may hereinafter acquire or utilize for research, training, extension, and technology demonstration, and seed production purposes shall be exempted from the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL).

SECTION 14. *Appropriations.* - The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Budget and Management are hereby authorized and directed to set aside out of the existing funds of the DA the amount of Six hundred million pesos (P600,000,000.00) as the initial fund of the PhilCorn for CY 2026, to be used for its initial operations, including provisions for salary of personnel, conduct of research and technology promotion, construction of office buildings and laboratories, and other physical infrastructure, purchase and development of experimental farms, and acquisition and purchase of equipment for laboratories, farm development, and offices. This initial amount shall be drawn from the DA National Corn Program, BAR

appropriations, for research, RP-Japan Fertilizer Grant (KR-2), Public Law 480 and from any other existing bilateral funding sources in the DA. Thereafter, the government contribution to the Institute's budget shall be provided for under its own Key Budgetary Inclusion (KBI) in the annual General Appropriations Act and from the import duties of at least ten percent (10%) from wheat and soybean for food and feeds which shall be transferred annually to PhilCorn. Furthermore, the PhilCorn Board of Trustees shall seek financial support from foreign donors, such as JICA, KOICA, AusAid, USAID, and other similar institutions for the establishment and improvement of PhilCorn infrastructure, laboratory facilities, field experiment stations development, training and extension programs, scholarship and training, and dormitory and housing for its qualified personnel.

The annual appropriations provided herein shall be subject to the fiscal control and management procedures provided for in Executive Order No. 714 (E.O. No. 714) of 1981. All funds, savings, grants, and income of PhilCorn shall constitute a revolving fund, to be managed as Trust Fund, and shall be considered part of the funds automatically released to PhilCorn.

SECTION 15. *Applicability of Civil Service Laws.* - The PhilCorn and its officers and employees shall be subject to the Civil Service Law, rules and regulations: *Provided, however,* That all technical personnel shall be selected on the basis of the highest possible standards of merit and fitness for public officials and employees, preferably those with postgraduate degrees, to be determined in accordance with such policies and guidelines as may be recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Board.

SECTION 16. *Auditor.* - The Chairperson of the Commission on Audit (COA) shall be the *ex-officio* auditor of PhilCorn. For this purpose, he may appoint a representative who shall be the auditor of PhilCorn, together with the necessary personnel to assist the COA representative in the performance of his duties: *Provided, however,* That the Branch stations shall also be served by an auditor.

SECTION 17. *Legal Counsel.* - The Government Corporate Counsel shall be the Legal Counsel of PhilCorn: *Provided, however,* That PhilCorn may establish its own legal unit, subject to the supervision and control of the Government Corporate Counsel, to handle the day-to-day legal matters affecting the affairs of PhilCorn.

SECTION 18. *Annual Report.* - The Executive Director, through the Board, shall submit to the President of the Philippines an annual report,

together with the audit report, on the relevant accounts, generally dealing with the activities and operations of PhilCorn.

SECTION 19. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 20. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,