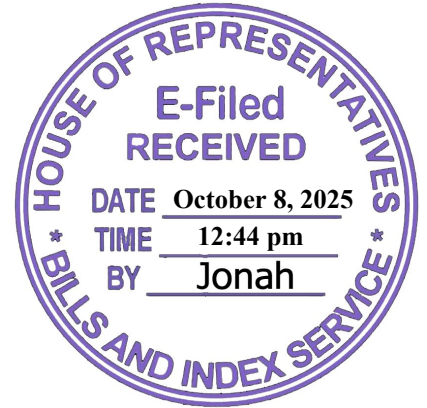




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5296



Introduced by Representative **ANTONINO B. ROMAN III**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines' agriculture and fisheries sectors continue to face long-standing problems that limit their growth and stability. Despite numerous laws, programs, and oversight bodies, these efforts remain fragmented, often resulting in overlapping functions, inefficient spending, and weak coordination among agencies. Farmers and fishers — who form nearly a quarter of the nation's workforce — continue to struggle with low productivity, declining participation, and limited access to support systems that could improve their incomes and competitiveness.

These challenges persist because policy direction, implementation, and monitoring are often carried out in isolation. Agencies work within their own mandates with little integration, causing duplication of programs and inconsistencies in strategy. Meanwhile, issues such as climate change, postharvest losses, poor logistics, and lack of access to financing continue to weaken the sector's performance and the country's food security.

This bill seeks to establish a Congressional Commission on Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food Security (AGRICOM) — a special, independent body that will take a comprehensive look at the entire agriculture and fisheries landscape. The Commission will review existing laws, policies, and programs; assess institutional bottlenecks and overlaps; and recommend concrete, time-bound reforms to make government efforts more cohesive, efficient, and responsive to current realities.

AGRICOM will serve as a bridge between policy and implementation. It will bring together experts, legislators, government agencies, and stakeholders from the private sector, academe, and local governments to develop actionable reforms. Its goal is to streamline the bureaucracy, modernize systems, strengthen coordination, and ensure that every peso spent in the sector contributes directly to food security and rural prosperity.

By aligning government policies and investments under a unified, evidence-based framework, this measure aims to transform Philippine agriculture and fisheries into dynamic, sustainable, and globally competitive engines of inclusive growth.

Immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antonino B. Roman III', with a stylized, flowing script.

ANTONINO B. ROMAN III



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 5296

Introduced by Representative **ANTONINO B. ROMAN III**

AN ACT
CREATING A CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE,
FISHERIES, AND FOOD SECURITY TO REVIEW, ASSESS, AND EVALUATE
THE STATE OF PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURE AND RECOMMEND
INNOVATIVE AND TARGETED POLICY REFORMS IN AGRICULTURE,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “Congressional Commission on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Security” (AGRICOM) Act.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State shall reaffirm the promotion of a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation, freeing the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.

The State shall affirm labor as a primary socio-economic force, develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos, and promote comprehensive rural development and agrarian reform.

To such ends, the State shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that the national agriculture and fisheries sector shall be a robust, dynamic and sustainable means to economic security on participants on the production side of the sector, and shall be a driver for human capital development, human liberation and development, and overall well-being and welfare on the part of Filipino consumers.

SECTION 3. Objectives of AGRICOM. – The Commission shall critically review and assess agriculture and fisheries policies, strategies, and programs to attain the following objectives:

- a. Re-examine public sector goals and objectives with respect to agriculture and fisheries;
- b. Modify agriculture and fisheries policies and public expenditures to integrate modern technologies and climate change adaption with the ultimate goal of raising the

productivity and global competitiveness of our local agriculture and fisheries subsectors, and to employ long-term policy instruments for raising productivity, protecting the environment and improving market efficiency and ensure equity and social justice, particularly for the benefit of small farmers and families;

- c. Refocus and re-prioritize support programs for agriculture and fisheries to ensure food security in basic staples for all Filipino communities;
- d. Restructure and streamline agriculture and fisheries-related bureaucracies to address institutional weaknesses and shortcomings, including the relationship between and among national, provincial, and local stakeholders, in order to effectively implement agriculture and fisheries policies and programs, particularly at the grassroots level; and
- e. Encourage the active involvement of producers, cooperatives, media, banks, financial institutions, and other members of the private sector in the development of agribusiness.

SECTION 4. Creation of AGRICOM. – There is hereby created a Congressional Commission on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Security, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, to undertake a comprehensive national assessment and evaluation of the performance of the Philippine agriculture and fisheries sector for the purpose of recommending transformative, concrete and targeted reforms in the sector with the end in view of ensuring food security in the Philippines.

SECTION 5. Composition of AGRICOM. – The Commission shall be composed of twelve (12) members: six (6) from the Senate and six (6) from the House of Representatives: Provided, That one (1) member from each chamber shall represent the Minority, as designated by the Minority Leader of each House.

The Chairpersons of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs, and the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change shall be members of the Commission on the part of the Senate.

The Chairpersons of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food, the House Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources, the House Committee on Agrarian Reform, and the House Committee on Climate Change shall be members of the Commission on the part of the House of Representatives.

The members of the Commission shall receive no compensation, but travelling, communications, and other necessary expenses shall be allowed, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations.

The members of the Commission shall receive no compensation, but travelling, communication, and other necessary expenses shall be allowed, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 6. Executive Director. – The Commission shall appoint an Executive Director who must be a recognized expert in agriculture and fisheries.

The Executive Director shall serve full-time with the rank, privileges, and emoluments of an Executive Director IV (Salary Grade 29).

SECTION 7. Technical Secretariat. – A Technical Secretariat, to be headed by the Executive Director, shall be organized to provide technical and administrative support to the Commission in the exercise of its powers and performance of its functions under Section 11 of this Act.

The Executive Director shall organize its staff and technical panel, and hire and appoint such employees and personnel, whether temporary, contractual, or on consultancy, and determine their compensation subject to applicable civil service laws, rules and regulations, with a view to ensuring a competent and efficient secretariat.

The Technical Secretariat shall co-exist with the Commission.

SECTION 8. Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) as Research Arm. – The PIDS shall serve as the research arm of the Commission. During the course of the Commission's existence, it shall produce data-based research and provide analysis to contribute to the formulation of agriculture and fisheries policy recommendations. It may coordinate with existing advisory and consultative bodies on agriculture and

SECTION 9. Agriculture and Fisheries Legislation and Policy Advisory Council. – An Agriculture and Fisheries Legislation and Policy Advisory Council is hereby created to provide the Commission with expert assistance and advice. The members of the Advisory Council shall always be present in all meetings of the Commission. The Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, upon the recommendation of the members of the Commission, shall choose recognized experts from the following sectors to form part of the Advisory Council: three (3) members from state university academia with equal representation from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, two (2) members from the business sector, two (2) members from government agriculture and fisheries agencies, two (2) members who are heads of local government units (LCDs), and two (2) members from civil society organizations and development partners engaged in agriculture and fisheries.

SECTION 10. Duration of AGRICOM. – The Commission shall accomplish its mandate within three (3) years from its organization, and shall commence its mandate upon the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 11. Powers and Functions of AGRICOM. – The Commission shall:

- a. Formulate short-term and long-term policy and program recommendations relating to agriculture and fisheries consisting specific, targeted, measurable and time-bound solutions to the following:
 - i. Sectoral plans and targets;
 - ii. Physical and digital infrastructure;
 - iii. Trainings and programs;
 - iv. Financing; and
 - v. Coordination among departments and stakeholders.
- a. Approve the workplan, guidelines and overall framework for the conduct of the national review, assessment and harmonization tasks and the budget for the programs of the Commission and all disbursements therefrom, including compensation of all personnel;

- b. Hold hearings and receive testimonies, reports and expert advice on the status of the Philippine agriculture and fisheries sector and its subsectors, exhaust available options to identify problems, and consolidate coherent courses of action as remedies;
- c. Summon by subpoena any public official or private person to testify before it, or require by subpoena duces tecum the production of necessary documents, as may be deemed necessary by the Commission;
- d. Secure from any department, bureau, office or instrumentality of the government technical information, preparation and production of reports, and the submission of recommendations or plans, as may be required;
- e. Conduct multi-stakeholder consultations, using proper mechanisms and guidance;
- f. Collaborate with emerging and innovative industries and services for the sharing of important information relative to their practice in the development of the agriculture and fisheries sectors;
- g. Review and act upon the recommendations of the Technical Secretariat or Standing Committees, or both, as it may deem appropriate;
- h. Report to Congress biannually its accomplishments, findings and recommendations on actions to be taken by Congress, the departments, and other government agencies concerned with the implementation of policies and programs related to agriculture and fisheries sector;
- i. Submit a final report of its findings and recommendations with a program of implementation to the President and Congress at the end of its term;
- j. Recommend the adoption of legislation and other executive measures pursuant to its findings;
- k. Review and prioritize pending legislation before both Houses pursuant to the findings contained in the report of the Commission; and
- l. Perform such other duties and functions as may be necessary to attain its objectives.

SECTION 12. Standing Committees. – The Commission shall establish standing committees from among its members, to be chaired by members or experts from multisectoral groups, and may engage public and private resource persons as needed.

SECTION 13. Appropriations. – The initial funding for this Act shall be charged against available appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives. Thereafter, the amounts necessary for its continued implementation, including deficiencies, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, subject to budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules.

SECTION 14. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 15. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 16. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,