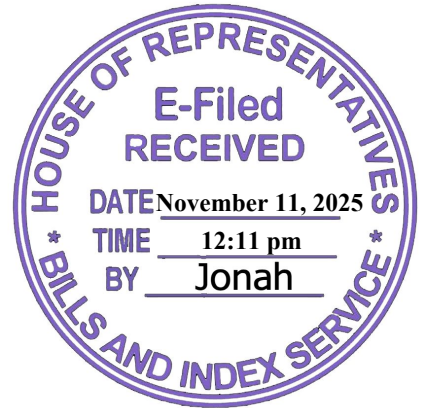




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5818



Introduced by Representative SITTIE SHAHARA “BAI DIMPLE” I. MASTURA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 17 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF THE FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES, INTEGRATING ALL LAWS PERTINENT THERETO, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES” AS AMENDED

This bill seeks to protect municipal fishing in light of the December 11, 2023 ruling of the Malabon RTC Branch 170 declaring that certain provisions of RA 8550 otherwise known as the “Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998”, as amended and its implementing rules and regulations are unconstitutional.

A judgement that is seen as a direct threat to the livelihood of millions of municipal fisherfolks because it effectively nullified the social justice provisions of RA 7160, otherwise known as the “Local Government Code of 1991”.

Municipal waters are crucial to the livelihood of small-scale fishing because of their dependence on these waters for basic food and sustenance. The preferential access granted to municipal fisherfolks is a constitutional guarantee of equal opportunities in a sector that is heavily commercialized.

Commercial fishing vessels, due to their size and numbers will cause irreparable damage to marine biodiversity, including depletion of fish stocks, destruction of coral reefs and seagrass beds.

By protecting municipal fishing, we ensure a sustainable future for the marine environment and communities that depend on it for their survival because the 15-kilometer stretch from shore is not just an imaginary demarcation line for millions of our fellow Filipinos but an assurance that the State has not abandoned them.

At a time when our fishermen are denied access to our exclusive economic zones and rich fishing grounds in the West Philippine Sea by foreign nationals, this predicament that our fisherfolks find themselves in, is insensitive and downright cruel.

Passage of this measure is therefore earnestly sought.



SITTIE SHAHARA "BAI DIMPLE" I. MASTURA

Representative

Maguindanao del Norte with Cotabato City, Lone District



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

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5818**

Introduced by Representative SITTIE SHAHARA “BAI DIMPLE” I. MASTURA

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 17 AND 21 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF THE FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES, INTEGRATING ALL LAWS PERTINENT THERETO, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES” AS AMENDED

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

SECTION 1. Section 17 of Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as the “Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998”, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 17. Grant of Fishing Privileges in Municipal Waters. – The duly registered fisherfolks organizations / cooperatives shall have [preference] **EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS** in the grant of fishery rights by the municipal / city council pursuant to Section 149 of the Local Government Code: Provided, That in areas where there are special agencies or offices vested with jurisdiction over municipal waters by virtue of special laws creating this agencies such as, but not limited to, the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, said offices and agencies shall continue to grant permits for proper management and implementation of the aforementioned structures.

SEC. 2. Section 21 of Republic Act No. 8550, is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 21 Priority of Resident Municipal Fisherfolk. – Resident municipal fisherfolk of the municipality concerned and their organizations / cooperatives shall have [priority] EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS to exploit municipal and demarcated fishery areas of the said municipality.

SEC. 3. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 4. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.