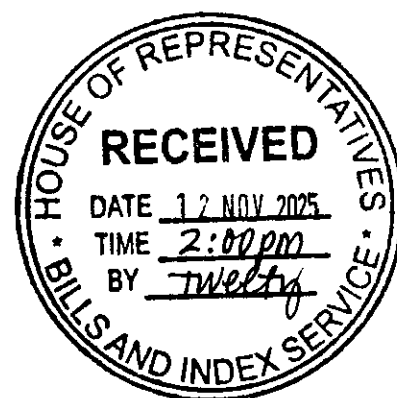


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO: 5909

Introduced By: **HON. CLAUDE P. BAUTISTA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (Republic Act No. 8550, as amended) declares as a national policy the achievement of food security as the overriding consideration in the utilization, management, development, conservation, and protection of the country's fishery resources, in order to adequately meet the food needs of the population.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), aquaculture contributed 2.246 million metric tons (MT) or 54.15 percent of the total fishery production of 4.248 million MT in 2022. By the first quarter of 2023, aquaculture's share further rose to 55 percent, equivalent to 545,640 MT out of the 991,140 MT total fishery production.

Milkfish or bangus (*Chanos chanos*) remains one of the country's most important aquaculture species. In 2020, its production value amounted to ₱42.879 billion, the highest among all aquaculture species (BAS, 2020). Beyond raw production, the bangus industry also supports strong domestic and international markets through various processed products such as daing na bangus, smoked milkfish, and boneless milkfish, which have become staples both for local consumption and export.

In the Municipality of Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, particularly in Barangay Basiawan, milkfish culture through traditional fishcaging is the primary source of livelihood. However, the absence of modern facilities and technology, coupled with fluctuating market prices, has led to declining production, thereby reducing income opportunities for fisherfolk and adversely affecting their economic well-being.

The establishment of a milkfish hatchery in Barangay Basiawan will directly address these challenges. It will provide local fisherfolk with access to a sustainable source of quality fingerlings, strengthen their capacity to engage in the entire hatchery cycle—from cultivation, production, and harvesting, to marketing—and introduce innovation and sustainable aquaculture practices. This, in turn, will empower the community to adopt responsible resource management while enhancing both productivity and profitability.

With this measure, stakeholders in the milkfish industry will be better positioned to produce high-quality, marketable bangus not only for regional and national consumption, but also for the export market. This initiative will significantly contribute to achieving the country's goals of food security while simultaneously generating employment, stimulating local economies, and bolstering the national aquaculture industry.

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


CLAUDE P. BAUTISTA

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5909

Introduced by Representative Claude P. Bautista

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MILKFISH HATCHERY IN SITIO KUMASI, BRGY. BASIAWAN,
MUNICIPALITY OF STA. MARIA, PROVINCE OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Establishment of a Milkfish Hatchery in Sitio Kumasi, Brgy. Basiawan, Sta. Maria .- There shall be established a milkfish hatchery in Sitio Kumasi, Brgy. Basiawan, Municipality of Sta. Maria, Province of Davao Occidental under the supervision of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture (BFAR-DA).

SECTION 2. Management of the Milkfish Hatchery.-The BFAR-DA shall transfer the management of the milkfish hatchery to the local government of Sta. Maria within two (2) years after its construction through a memorandum of agreement. It shall implement a training and phasing-in program for the local government personnel on the management and operation of the hatchery.

The BFAR-DA shall conduct continuing research and experimentation on milkfish aquaculture, especially as they apply to local conditions to discover new methods and technology that shall benefit the milkfish industry.

SECTION 3. Appropriations.- The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's programs the establishment of the milkfish hatchery in Sitio Kumasi, Brgy. Basiawan Municipality of Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The local government unit shall set aside funds from any available local revenue in the amount deemed appropriate for the operationalization of the hatchery.

SECTION 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*- Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall issue the rules and regulations on the supervision, operation, monitoring, and the eventual transfer of the management of the milkfish hatchery to the local government of Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.*-If any portion or provision of this Act shall be unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.*- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,