

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5985



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In line with the policy of the State to improve the socio-economic well-being of the workers in the agricultural sector, this Bill aims to provide necessary assistance to them to further improve their work. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, among the basic sectors of Philippine society, farmers posted one of the highest poverty indices with 34.3%. It also consistently registered as one with the highest poverty incidence in 2006, 2009, and 2012. As such, this Bill aims to address several problems that these workers face.

It must be acknowledged that access to the internet has become a necessity during this day and age, with the vast amount of information that can be uploaded and spread using different social media platforms. Using the internet, our farmers can keep up to date with weather bulletins, information as regards different agricultural technology and planting methods, and the like. Through social media, they can also be able to take advantage of these platforms to directly sell their produce at much competitive prices, eliminating the need for middlemen.

In light of the foregoing, the Bill proposes measures oriented primarily towards enhancing assistance to those in the agricultural development sectors.

It is for the foregoing premises that the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.


ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS
Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party-List

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AN ACT
PROVIDING INTERNET ACCESS FOR THE AGRI-BUSINESS SECTOR

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 “Internet Access for Farmers Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared as a policy of the State to provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services.

Considering that the State recognizes the importance of the development of the agricultural sector in the overall goal of sustainable national economic growth, the State shall hereby endeavor to promote and comprehensively improve the opportunities given to workers in the agricultural sectors.

SECTION 3. Roles and Responsibilities. – All concerned national agencies shall support the implementation of this Act and promote best practices that fall within their respective mandates. The following shall identify, prepare, and provide policy guidance and technical resource assistance to the Department of Agriculture and the Local Government Units in the implementation of this Act on a national and local scale:

a) The Department of Information and Communications Technology shall provide technical assistance in planning, developing, and formulating the framework of internet assistance to be extended to the farmers.

b) The Department of Interior and Local Government shall take the lead in partnering with Local Government Units in raising awareness and promulgating policy measures in the implementation on the local level.

c) The Department of Public Works and Highways shall assist with the construction of infrastructure that is necessary to provide internet access to farmers.

d) The Department of Agriculture shall arrange periodic online seminars and materials for online dissemination, with particular focus on topics that will be immediately useful for farmers.

The Department of Information and Communications Technology shall regularly provide technical and financial assistance in monitoring the status of farmers' internet access and shall provide measures for the improvement of such.

SECTION 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DA, in cooperation with the DICT, DILG, DPWH, and the private sector stakeholders on agricultural development, shall formulate and prepare the necessary implementing rules and regulations for the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. Monitoring and Implementation. – The DA shall form an Oversight Committee to monitor the implementation of the provisions of this Act. The Oversight Committee shall be composed of representatives from the DICT, DILG, DPWH, and the private sector stakeholders on agricultural development: *Provided*, That the Oversight Committee shall submit bi-annual reports regarding the status of the implementation of the provisions of this Act to the Committee on Agriculture and Food of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

SECTION 6. Funding. – The funding essential in carrying out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the proper General Appropriations Act: *Provided*, That the first inclusion shall be in the General Appropriations Act during the year following its enactment into law.

SECTION 7. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,