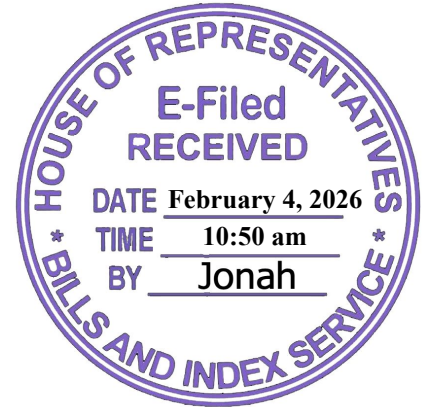


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 7604

Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING BUDGET TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SAFEGUARDS IN THE INCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY AND
ALL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE
PROGRAM AND THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A transparent and participatory budgeting system is one of the cornerstones of a vibrant democracy, ensuring that every peso spent reflects the collective will and actual needs of the people. By bridging the gap between national priorities and local realities, the government can foster a more inclusive and interconnected development agenda where transparency serves as a catalyst for progress. However, the current infrastructure budgeting process often falls short of this ideal, remaining prone to systemic inefficiencies and a top-down approach that lacks robust safeguards against redundancy and misalignment.

To bridge this gap, this bill mandates the prior endorsement of Local and Regional Development Councils as a prerequisite for the inclusion of infrastructure projects in the budget and the subsequent release of funds. By institutionalizing this vital link between national allocation and local oversight, the measure ensures that public investments are vetted by those most affected by them. These interventions will strengthen inter-agency coordination, safeguard the prudent use of public resources, and transform the budget process into a more transparent, accountable, and responsive mechanism for national nation-building.

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


HON. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

Representative
1st District, Sorsogon

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "Grassroots
2 Infrastructure Planning and Budgeting Act".
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policies.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the
5 State to uphold and protect the right of the people to meaningful, effective, and
6 genuine participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making.
7 In recognition of this right, and pursuant to the constitutional mandate to facilitate,
8 by law, the establishment of adequate and inclusive consultation mechanisms, the
9 State shall institutionalize and further strengthen the role of local and regional
10 development councils. These councils shall serve as key platforms in ensuring the
11 transparent, responsive, and accountable planning, authorization, and utilization of
12 government appropriations for infrastructure projects.
13

14 **SEC. 3. Statement of Objectives.** – The objectives of this Act are as follows:

- 15 (a) To institutionalize a Bottom-up Budgeting or Grassroots Participatory
16 Budgeting System, ensuring that priority infrastructure projects
17 identified at the local level are duly considered and funded at the
18 national level, and to strengthen mechanisms for coordination,
19 cooperation, and information-sharing between national government
20 agencies and local government units;
21 (b) To prevent duplication and overlap of projects across government
22 agencies;
23 (c) Empower Local Government Units (LGUs) realize meaningful
24 decentralization and devolution;and

1 (d) To enhance the transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of the
2 national budget and the overall budget process.
3

4 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to all infrastructure projects of
5 national government agencies and instrumentalities, including constitutional offices,
6 state universities and colleges, and government-owned or -controlled corporations
7 with or without original charter: Provided, That for the purposes of this Act, the term
8 "infrastructure projects" shall refer to the construction, improvement, rehabilitation,
9 demolition, repair, restoration, or maintenance of roads and bridges, railways,
10 airports, seaports, communication facilities, civil works components of information
11 technology projects, irrigation, flood control and drainage, water supply, sanitation,
12 sewerage and solid waste management systems, shore protection, energy/power and
13 electrification facilities, national buildings, school buildings, hospital buildings, and
14 other related construction projects of the government.
15

16 **SEC. 5. Prior Endorsement requirement.** – No infrastructure project shall
17 be included in the proposed National Expenditure Program (NEP) submitted by the
18 President, nor introduced as an amendment to the NEP or General Appropriations Bill,
19 unless such infrastructure project is duly endorsed by the Regional Development
20 Council and either the Provincial Development Council or the City/Municipal
21 Development Council and their respective Sanggunians having jurisdiction over the
22 area where the project is to be implemented. Such endorsement shall be deemed as
23 a requisite or condition sine qua non for the inclusion of any infrastructure project in
24 the General Appropriations Act and for the subsequent release of any allotment for its
25 implementation.
26

27 **SEC. 6. Transitory Requirements.** – For Fiscal Year 2027, the requirement
28 of prior endorsement provided under Section 5 of this Act shall apply to infrastructure
29 projects implemented by national executive agencies, including, but not limited to,
30 projects implemented by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education,
31 Department of Health, Department of Information and Communication Technology,
32 Department of Transportation. Consequently, no funds shall be released nor any
33 procurement activity shall be performed for such infrastructure projects
34

35 **SEC. 7. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations,
36 and other issuances or parts thereof, which are contrary or inconsistent with this Act
37 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.
38

39 **Sec. 8. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
40 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
41 circulation.

Approved,