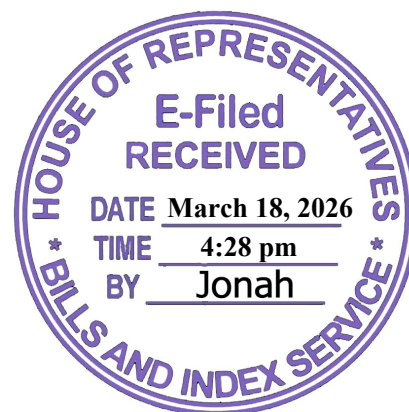


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8665



Introduced by **Hon. Bernadette S. Barbers**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Agriculture has long been the backbone of local communities, sustaining families, shaping rural life, and forming the foundation of the nation's economy, particularly in cities and towns where generations have depended on the land, seas, rivers, and lakes for livelihood and food security.

Beyond its economic contribution, agriculture embodies a shared heritage of stewardship and productivity, which continues to demand competent and continuing guidance, innovation and institutional support at the local level.

However, Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, presently states that the positions of City or Municipal Agriculturist and Veterinarian are optional, resulting in the absence of reliable, qualified, and efficient technical support, to the detriment of agricultural development and the continuity of essential services to farmers, fisherfolk, and the animal industry, particularly faced with the challenges of African Swine Fever (ASF) and other diseases.

Agriculturists promote modern farming techniques, boost crop productivity, and support agricultural initiatives. Veterinarians maintain animal health, prevent and control livestock diseases, ensure meat inspection, and execute public health programs like rabies prevention.

Given the challenges to food security, climate-related risks, and animal-borne diseases, it is crucial to enhance the capacity of local government units (LGUs) in the agriculture and veterinary sectors. Mandating these positions ensures that qualified professionals lead local development and protect animal and public health.

Thus, this bill seeks to mandate the permanent appointment of Municipal or City Agriculturists and Municipal or City Veterinarians in all cities and municipalities. This effectively amends Sections 443, 482, and 489 of the Local Government Code of 1991 to ensure the effective planning, implementation, and sustainability of agricultural programs and agrarian reform initiatives within local communities.

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



HON. BERNADETTE S. BARBERS
2nd District, Surigao del Norte

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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Introduced by **Hon. Bernadette S. Barbers**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY APPOINTMENTS OF MUNICIPAL AND CITY
AGRICULTURIST AND VETERINARIAN OFFICERS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE “LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

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

SECTION 1. Section 443 of Republic Act No. 7160, is hereby amended to read
as follows:

“Section 443. *Officials of the Municipal Government.* — (a) There shall be in each municipality a municipal mayor, a municipal vice-mayor, sangguniang bayan members, a secretary to the sangguniang bayan, a municipal treasurer, a municipal assessor, a municipal accountant, a municipal budget officer, a municipal planning and development coordinator, a municipal engineer/building official, a municipal health officer, **A MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURIST, A MUNICIPAL VETERINARIAN**, and a municipal civil registrar.

xxx.”

SECTION 2. Section 482 of the Republic Act No. 7160 is hereby amended, to
read as follows:

“Section 482. *Qualifications, Powers and Duties.* (a) No person shall be appointed agriculturist unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree in agriculture or any related course from a recognized college or university and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have practiced his profession in agriculture or acquired experience in a related field for at least five (5) years in the case of the provincial and city agriculturist, and three (3) years in the case of the municipal agriculturist.

The position of the agriculturist shall be mandatory for the provincial ~~[government and optional for the]~~, city and municipal governments.

xxx.”

SECTION. 3. Section 489 of Republic Act No. 7160 is hereby amended, to read as follows:

“Section 489. *Qualifications, Powers and Duties.* (a) No person shall be appointed veterinarian unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a licensed doctor of veterinary medicine. He must have practiced his profession for at least three (3) years in the case of provincial or city veterinarian and at least one (1) year in the case of the municipal veterinarian.

The appointment of a veterinarian officer is mandatory for the provincial, ~~[and]~~ city, **AND MUNICIPAL** governments.

xxx.”

SECTION 4. Appropriations. — The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and every year thereafter (GAA).

SECTION 5. Separability Clause. — If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. — All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations as well as local ordinances contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. 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,