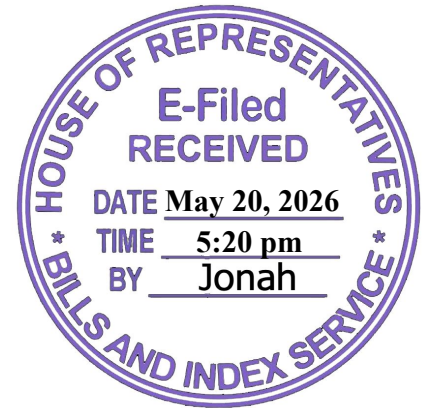




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session



House Bill No. 9376

Introduced by

Sergio C. Dagooc, *APEC Party-List*

Presley C. De Jesus, *PhilRECA Party-List*

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Reliable electricity service is a basic requirement for local development, public service delivery, livelihood, education, health, disaster response, and the daily comfort and security of Filipino households. In the Province of Leyte, the Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V) has been performing this essential public service for decades, supplying electricity to communities, institutions, and industries within its coverage area.

This measure seeks to grant LEYECO V a legislative franchise to construct, install, establish, operate, own, manage, and maintain distribution systems for the conveyance of electric power to end-users in the City of Ormoc and in the municipalities of Albueria, Kananga, Matag-Ob, Villaba, Palompon, Tabango, San Isidro, Calubian, Leyte, Merida, and Isabel, all in the Province of Leyte.

LEYECO V traces its institutional foundation to its incorporation with the National Electrification Administration on December 21, 1977. On August 1, 1979, it assumed the operations of the former Ormoc Electric and Lights Company, then serving fewer than 3,000 consumers concentrated mainly in Ormoc City.

Since then, the cooperative has expanded its reach and capability, now serving the electricity requirements of one city and eleven municipalities in the 3rd and 4th Districts of Leyte.

At present, LEYECO V has energized three hundred ninety-one (391) barangays and provides electric service to households, schools, public facilities, commercial establishments, industries, and other registered member-consumers within its franchise area.

To meet the increasing needs of its member-consumer-owners, LEYECO V maintains multiple substations with significant installed capacity and sources its power from several suppliers and the electricity market. It has also undertaken system improvement initiatives, including the uprating of substations and the deployment of technologies intended to strengthen reliability, system monitoring, and operational efficiency.

LEYECO V has likewise moved toward a more modern and consumer-responsive distribution utility. Its operations now include online and electronic payment options, SMS advisories, digital complaint mechanisms, automated systems, Android-based meter reading with GPS, website and social media information platforms, radio-based public updates, and other innovations intended to make service more accessible to its member-consumer-owners.

The cooperative's modernization efforts are also aligned with the need to build a more resilient and efficient electric distribution system. Through its smart distribution utility initiatives, including SCADA deployment, GIS-based asset management, advanced metering initiatives, and fiber optics planning, LEYECO V is preparing its network to respond to the changing demands of consumers, technology, and the electric power industry.

The grant of a franchise to LEYECO V will ensure the continuity of electric distribution service in its coverage area and will provide the legal basis for the cooperative to continue improving its facilities, expanding its services, and protecting the welfare of its member-consumer-owners.

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

SERGIO C. DAGOOC
APEC Party-List

PRESLEY C. DE JESUS
PhilRECA Party-List



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AN ACT

GRANTING THE LEYTE V ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC. (LEYECO V) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, OWN, MANAGE AND MAINTAIN DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF ELECTRIC POWER TO THE END-USERS IN THE CITY OF ORMOC AND MUNICIPALITIES OF ALBUERA, KANANGA, MATAG-OB, VILLABA, PALOMPON, TABANGO, SAN ISIDRO, CALUBIAN, LEYTE, MERIDA, AND ISABEL, PROVINCE OF LEYTE

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

1 **SECTION 1. Nature and Scope of Franchise.** – Subject to the
2 provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and regulations,
3 there is hereby granted to the Leyte V Electric Cooperative Inc. (LEYECO V)
4 hereunder referred to as the Grantee, its successors or assigns a franchise to
5 construct, install, establish, operate, own, manage and maintain in the public
6 interest and commercial purposes, a distribution system for the conveyance
7 of electric power to the end-users in the City of Ormoc and municipalities of
8 Albueria, Kananga, Matag-Ob, Villaba, Palompon, Tabango, San Isidro,
9 Calubian, Leyte, Merida, and Isabel, Province of Leyte.

10 As used in this Act, distribution system refers to the system of wires
11 and associated facilities including sub-transmission lines belonging to a

1 franchised distribution utility extending between the delivery point on the
2 national transmission system or generating facility and the metering point or
3 facility of the end-users.

4 **SEC. 2. Manner of Operation of Facilities.** – All electric distribution
5 facilities, lines and systems for electric services installed, owned, maintained,
6 operated, managed by the Grantee, its successors or assigns shall be operated
7 or maintained at all times in a superior manner, and it shall be the duty of
8 the Grantee, its successors or assigns, whenever required to do so by the
9 Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), or its legal successor, or the
10 Department of Energy (DOE), or its legal successor, or any other government
11 agency concerned to modify, improve and change such facilities or systems in
12 such manner and to such extent as the progress in science or technology and
13 improvements or innovations in the electric power services may render
14 reasonable and proper.

15 Whenever practicable, and for purposes of maintaining order, safety
16 and aesthetics along the highways, roads, streets, alleys or right-of-way, the
17 Grantee may allow the use of free spaces in its poles, facilities, or right-of-way
18 by interested parties upon reasonable compensation to the Grantee
19 considering the costs incurred to accommodate and administer the use of the
20 Grantee's facilities by such parties. The ERC shall decide in case of dispute
21 or disagreement between the parties.

22 **SEC. 3. Authority of the ERC and NEA.** – The Grantee shall secure
23 from the ERC, NEA, or any government agency having jurisdiction over their
24 operations, the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and any other
25 license, permit or authority indispensable for the construction and operation
26 of the electric power distribution system.

27 **SEC. 4. Excavation and Restoration Works.** – For the purpose of
28 erecting and maintaining the poles or other supports for said facilities, wires
29 or other conductors or for the purpose of laying and maintaining said
30 facilities, wires, cables or other conductors, it shall be lawful for the Grantee,
31 its successors, or assignees, in coordination with the Department of Public
32 Works and Highways (DPWH) or the local government unit (LGU) concerned,
33 as may be appropriate, to make excavations or lay conduits in any of the
34 public places, highways, road, streets, lanes, alleys, avenues, sidewalks, or
35 bridges of the province, cities or municipalities: *Provided, however,* That a
36 public place, highway, road, street, lane, alley, avenue, sidewalk, or bridge
37 disturbed, altered, or changed by reason of erection of poles or other supports
38 or the underground laying of wires, other conductors or conduits, shall be
39 repaired and replaced in workmanlike manner by the Grantee, its successors
40 or assignees, in accordance with the standards set by the DPWH or the local

1 government unit concerned. Should the Grantee, its successors or assignees,
2 after the ten (10)-day notice from the grant of authority, fail, refuse or neglect
3 to repair or replace any part of public place, highway, road, street, lane, alley,
4 avenue, sidewalk, or bridge altered, changed or disturbed by the said Grantee,
5 its successors or assignees, then the DPWH or the local government unit
6 concerned shall have the right to have the same repaired and replaced in good
7 order and condition and charge the Grantee, its successors or assignees,
8 double the amount of the cost and expenses for such repair or replacement.

9 **SEC. 5. Responsibility to the Public.** – The Grantee shall supply
10 electricity to its captive market in the least costly manner. In the interest of
11 the public good and as far as feasible and whenever required by the ERC, the
12 Grantee shall modify, improve, or change its facilities, poles, lines, systems
13 and equipment for the purpose of providing efficient and reliable service and
14 reduced electricity costs. The Grantee shall charge reasonable and just power
15 rates for its services to all types of consumers within its franchised area in
16 order that business and industries shall be able to compete.

17 The Grantee shall have the obligation to provide open and
18 nondiscriminatory access to its distribution system and services for any end-
19 user within its franchise area consistent with Republic Act (RA) No. 9136,
20 otherwise known as the “Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001”. The
21 Grantee shall not engage in any activity that will constitute an abuse of
22 market power such as unfair trade practices, monopolistic schemes, and
23 other activities that will hinder competitiveness of business and industries.

24 **SEC. 6. Rates for Services.** – The retail rates and charges for the
25 distribution of electric power by the Grantee to its end-users shall be
26 regulated by and subject to the approval of the ERC or its legal successor.

27 The Grantee shall identify and segregate in its electricity bill to the end-
28 users the components of the retail rate pursuant to RA 9136, unless otherwise
29 amended. Such rates charged by the Grantee to the end-users shall be made
30 public and transparent. The Grantee shall implement lifeline rate to
31 marginalized end-users as mandated under RA 9136.

32 **SEC. 7. Promotion of Consumer Interests.** – The Grantee herein shall
33 establish a consumer desk that will handle consumer complaints and ensure
34 adequate promotion of consumer interests. The Grantee shall act with
35 dispatch on all complaints brought before it.

36 **SEC. 8. Commitment to Provide and Promote the Creation of**
37 **Employment Opportunities.** – The Grantee shall create employment
38 opportunities and shall allow on-the-job training in its franchise operation:

1 *Provided*, That priority shall be accorded to the residents where their principal
2 office is located: *Provided, further*, That the Grantee shall comply with the
3 applicable labor standards and allowance entitlement under existing labor
4 laws, rules and regulations, and similar issuances.

5 **SEC. 9. *Right of the Government.*** – A special right is hereby reserved
6 to the President of the Philippines, in times of war, rebellion, public peril,
7 calamity, emergency, disaster or disturbance of peace and order: to
8 temporarily take over and operate the stations or facilities of the Grantee; to
9 temporarily suspend the operation of any station or facility in the interest of
10 public safety, security, and public welfare; or to authorize the temporary use
11 and operation thereof by any agency of the government, upon due
12 compensation to the Grantee, for the use of the stations or facilities during
13 the period when these shall be so operated.

14 **SEC. 10. *Right of Eminent Domain.*** – Subject to the limitations and
15 procedures prescribed by law, the Grantee is authorized to exercise the right
16 of eminent domain insofar as it may be reasonably necessary for the efficient
17 maintenance and operation of services. The Grantee is authorized to install
18 and maintain its poles, wires, and other facilities over and across public
19 property, including streets, highways, forest reserves, and other similar
20 property of the Government of the Philippines, its branches, or any of its
21 instrumentalities. The Grantee may acquire such private property as is
22 actually necessary for the realization of the purposes for which this franchise
23 is granted: *Provided*, That proper expropriation proceedings shall have been
24 instituted and just compensation paid.

25 **SEC. 11. *Term of Franchise.*** – This franchise shall be for a term of
26 twenty-five (25) years that shall commence from the date of expiration of
27 electric cooperative's existing franchise, unless sooner cancelled. This
28 franchise shall be deemed *ipso facto* revoked in the event that the Grantee
29 fails to operate continuously for two (2) years.

30 **SEC. 12. *Warranty in Favor of the National and Local***
31 ***Governments.*** – The Grantee shall hold the national, provincial, city, and
32 municipal governments of the Philippines free from all claims, accounts,
33 demands, or actions arising from accidents causing injury to persons or
34 damage to properties, during the construction, installation, operation, and
35 maintenance of the distribution system of the Grantee.

36 **SEC. 13. *Liability for Damages.*** – The Grantee shall be liable for any
37 injury to persons and damage to properties arising from accidents by reason
38 of any defective construction under this franchise or of any neglect or
39 omission to keep its poles and wires in safe condition.

1 **SEC. 14. Sale, Lease, Transfer, Usufruct, or Assignment of**
2 **Franchise.** – The Grantee shall not sell, lease, transfer, grant the usufruct,
3 or assign this franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder to
4 any person, firm, company, corporation, or other commercial or legal entity,
5 or merge with any other corporation, or entity, or shall transfer the controlling
6 interest of the Grantee, whether as a whole or in parts, and whether
7 simultaneously or contemporaneously, to any such person, firm, company,
8 corporation, or entity without the prior approval of the Congress: *Provided,*
9 That Congress shall be informed of any sale, lease, transfer, grant of usufruct,
10 sale, or assignment of franchise or the rights and privileges acquired
11 thereunder, or of the merger, or sale of the controlling interest within sixty
12 (60) days after the completion of said transaction: *Provided, further,* That any
13 such transfer, sale, or assignment is in accordance with the constitutional
14 limitations: *Provided, furthermore,* That failure to report to Congress such
15 change of ownership shall render the franchise *ipso facto* revoked: *Provided,*
16 *finally,* That any person or entity to which this franchise is sold, transferred,
17 or assigned, shall be subject to the same conditions, terms, restrictions, and
18 limitations of this Act.

19 **SEC. 15. Reportorial Requirement.** – The Grantee shall submit an
20 annual report to Congress, through the Committee on Legislative Franchises
21 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Public Services of the
22 Senate, on its compliance with the terms and conditions of the franchise and
23 on its operations on or before April 30 of every year during the term of the
24 franchise. The reportorial compliance certificate issued by Congress shall be
25 required before any application for permit or certificate is accepted by the
26 ERC.

27 **SEC. 16. Fine.** – The failure of the Grantee to submit the requisite
28 annual report to Congress shall be penalized by a fine in the amount of Five
29 hundred pesos (P500.00) per working day of noncompliance which shall be
30 collected by the ERC. The fine shall be collected separately from the
31 reportorial penalties imposed by the ERC and shall be remitted to the Bureau
32 of Treasury.

33 **SEC. 17. Equality Clause.** – Any advantage, favor, privilege,
34 exemption, or immunity granted under existing franchises, or which may
35 hereafter be granted, upon prior review and approval of Congress, shall
36 become part of this franchise and shall be accorded immediately and
37 unconditionally to the herein Grantee: *Provided, however,* That the foregoing
38 shall neither apply to nor affect provisions concerning territory covered by the
39 franchise, the life span of the franchise or the type of service authorized by
40 the franchise: *Provided, further,* That the foregoing shall not apply to the sale,

1 lease, transfer, grant of usufruct, or assignment of legislative franchises with
2 prior congressional approval.

3 **SEC. 18. *Applicability of Existing Laws.*** – The Grantee shall comply
4 with and be subject to the provisions of Commonwealth Act No. 146 or the
5 “Public Service Act”, as amended, RA 9136, and RA 10531 or the “National
6 Electrification Administration Reform Act of 2013.”

7 **SEC. 19. *Existing Powers.*** – Existing mandates, powers, functions,
8 and privileges granted to electric cooperatives under existing laws, including
9 Section 10 of RA 10531 shall remain valid and effective, unless expressly
10 repealed by succeeding laws.

11 **SEC. 20. *Repealability and Non-Exclusivity Clause.*** – This franchise
12 shall be subject to amendment, alteration, or repeal by Congress when the
13 public interest so requires and shall not be interpreted as an exclusive grant
14 of the privileges herein provided for.

15 **SEC. 21. *Separability Clause.*** – If any of the sections or provisions of
16 this Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain
17 valid.

18 **SEC. 22. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive
19 orders, letters of instruction, administrative rules and regulations or parts
20 thereof which is are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act
21 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

22 **SEC. 23. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect upon the
23 expiration of the electric cooperative’s franchise or fifteen (15) days after its
24 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation,
25 whichever comes later.

26 *Approved,*