

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session



House Bill No. **9655**

Introduced by HONORABLE LORETO "AMBEN" S. AMANTE
3rd Legislative District, Province of Laguna

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE AUTONOMY, FISCAL CAPACITY, AND
INSTITUTIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF BARANGAYS AS THE BASIC
POLITICAL UNITS OF THE STATE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, " AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The barangay is the most immediate and accessible level of government, where public services are first delivered and democratic participation is most directly exercised. As the basic political unit of the State, it plays a critical role in governance, community development, and public service delivery.

Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991, institutionalized decentralization and local autonomy. However, more than three decades since its enactment, persistent structural and operational gaps remain at the barangay level. These include limited fiscal capacity, uneven access to resources, inadequate compensation and protection for barangay officials, and constraints in implementing locally responsive programs.

This measure seeks to strengthen the existing framework of the Local Government Code by introducing targeted amendments that enhance the autonomy, fiscal capability, and institutional support of barangays. It recognizes barangay officials as frontline public servants, ensures more predictable and equitable access to resources, and enables barangays to more effectively plan and deliver essential services responsive to local needs.

The proposed amendments are anchored on the constitutional principle of local autonomy and the policy of devolution. Rather than creating a separate legal regime,

this measure integrates reforms directly into the Local Government Code to ensure coherence, enforceability, and alignment with existing local governance structures.

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



HON. LORETO S. AMANTE

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

Section 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "*Barangay Development and Empowerment Act of 2026*."

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize, respect, and strengthen the autonomy of barangays as the basic political units of the Republic. The State shall promote the devolution of powers, functions, and resources to barangays to enable them to effectively discharge their mandate as primary planning, implementing, and service-delivery units.

National government agencies and local government units shall provide supportive coordination, capacity-building, and fiscal backing, while respecting barangay initiative, discretion, and accountability to their constituents.

Section 3. Section 384 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 384. Role of the Barangay. - As the basic political unit, the barangay serves as the primary planning and implementing unit of government policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities in the community, and as a forum wherein the collective views of the people may be expressed, crystallized and considered, and where disputes may be amicably settled.

IT SHALL FUNCTION AS AN EMPOWERED AND AUTONOMOUS LOCAL INSTITUTION CAPABLE OF IDENTIFYING, PRIORITIZING, AND ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS, CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF DECENTRALIZATION, PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY."

Section 4. Section 391 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 391. Powers, Duties, and Functions. -

(a) The sangguniang barangay, as the legislative body of the barangay, shall:

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"(23) Provide for the delivery of basic services; **[and]**

(24) ENACT MEASURES TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT;

(25) AUTHORIZE PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION; AND

"[(24)] (26) Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance."

Section 5. Section 393 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 393. Benefits of Barangay Officials. -

"(a) ~~[Barangay officials, including barangay tanods and members of the lupong tagapamayapa, shall receive honoraria, allowances, and such other emoluments as may be authorized by law or barangay, municipal or city ordinance in accordance with the provisions of this Code, but in no case shall it be less than One thousand pesos (P1,000.00) per month for the punong barangay and Six hundred pesos (P600.00) per month for the sangguniang barangay members, barangay treasurer, and barangay secretary: Provided, however, That the annual~~

~~appropriations for personal services shall be subject to the budgetary limitations prescribed under Title Five, Book II of this Code.]~~

“BARANGAY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE PUNONG BARANGAY, MEMBERS OF THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAY, THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN CHAIRPERSON, THE BARANGAY SECRETARY, AND THE BARANGAY TREASURER, ARE HEREBY RECOGNIZED AS FRONTLINE PUBLIC SERVANTS AND REGULAR EMPLOYEES PERFORMING ESSENTIAL GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS.

“IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, BARANGAY OFFICIALS SHALL BE ENTITLED TO STANDARDIZED COMPENSATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND BENEFITS TO WHICH A REGULAR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE MAY BE ENTITLED, CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION.

“PROVIDED, THAT THE COMPENSATION OF BARANGAY OFFICIALS SHALL BE DETERMINED THROUGH LOCAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCES, FUNDED FROM BARANGAY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES, WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO ENSURE EQUITY ACROSS BARANGAYS OF VARYING INCOME CLASSES:

“PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT IN NO CASE SHALL THE COMPENSATION OF BARANGAY OFFICIALS BE LESS THAN THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM STANDARDS:

(A) FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE SALARY OF A SANGGUNIANG BAYAN OR SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD MEMBER IN THE SAME CITY OR MUNICIPALITY, IN THE CASE OF THE PUNONG BARANGAY;

(B) THIRTY PERCENT (30%) OF THE SALARY OF A SANGGUNIANG BAYAN OR SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD MEMBER, IN THE CASE OF MEMBERS OF THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAY;

(C) TWENTY PERCENT (20%) OF THE SALARY OF A SANGGUNIANG BAYAN OR SANGGUNIANG

PANLUNGSOD MEMBER, IN THE CASE OF THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN CHAIRPERSON, THE BARANGAY SECRETARY, AND THE BARANGAY TREASURER;

"PROVIDED, FURTHERMORE, THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS WHICH ARE UNABLE TO MEET THE MINIMUM COMPENSATION STANDARDS DUE TO FISCAL LIMITATIONS MAY APPLY FOR EXEMPTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG), SUBJECT TO THE SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS AND THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE LOCAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONCERNED;

"PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT (DBM), IN COORDINATION WITH THE DILG, SHALL ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO ASSIST FISCALLY CONSTRAINED LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN COMPLYING WITH THIS SECTION;

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~~"(d) [All duly appointed members of the barangay tanod brigades, or their equivalent, which shall number not more than twenty (20) in each barangay, shall be granted insurance or other benefits during their incumbency, chargeable to the barangay or the city or municipal government to which the barangay belongs.]~~ THERE SHALL BE BARANGAY TANODS IN EVERY BARANGAY WHO SHALL MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER, AND ENFORCE ALL LAWS AND ORDINANCES RELATIVE TO THE PROTECTION OF LIVES AND PROPERTIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE BARANGAYS. THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAY SHALL, THROUGH A RESOLUTION, DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF BARANGAY TANODS NEEDED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE JURISDICTION.

"THE APPOINTMENT AND SELECTION OF BARANGAY TANODS SHALL BE DONE BY THE PUNONG BARANGAY WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAY CONCERNED IN

ACCORDANCE WITH MERIT AND FITNESS: PROVIDED, THAT NO PERSON SHALL BE APPOINTED BARANGAY TANOD, UNLESS HE OR SHE IS A CITIZEN OF THE PHILIPPINES, A RESIDENT OF THE BARANGAY CONCERNED, OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER AND OF SOUND MIND: PROVIDED FURTHER, THAT PATRONAGE AND PARTISAN CONSIDERATIONS SHALL NOT BE A BASIS FOR SUCH SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT.

"BARANGAY TANODS SHALL BE APPOINTED TO A PERMANENT STATUS DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAY THAT APPOINTED THEM.

"BARANGAY TANODS SHALL RECEIVE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES THROUGH LOCAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCES, FUNDED FROM BARANGAY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES, WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO ENSURE EQUITY ACROSS BARANGAYS OF VARYING INCOME CLASSES: PROVIDED, THAT THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM STANDARDS SHALL BE IMPOSED:

A. HONORARIA, ALLOWANCES, AND SUCH OTHER EMOLUMENTS AS MAY BE AUTHORIZED BY LAW OR BARANGAY, MUNICIPAL, OR CITY ORDINANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, AS AMENDED, BUT IN NO CASE SHALL BE LESS THAN SIX HUNDRED PESOS (P600.00) PER MONTH;

B. CHRISTMAS BONUS OF AT LEAST ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00) EACH, THE FUNDS FOR WHICH SHALL BE TAKEN FROM THE GENERAL FUND OF THE BARANGAY OR SUCH OTHER FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE PURPOSE;

C. INSURANCE COVERAGE WHICH SHALL INCLUDE, BUT SHALL NOT BE LIMITED TO, TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT DISABILITY, DOUBLE INDEMNITY, ACCIDENT INSURANCE, DEATH, AND BURIAL BENEFITS;

D. FREE MEDICAL CARE, INCLUDING SUBSISTENCE, MEDICINES, AND MEDICAL ATTENDANCE IN ANY GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL OR INSTITUTION: PROVIDED, THAT SUCH HOSPITAL CARE SHALL INCLUDE SURGERY

- iii. Participatory planning, including the preparation and implementation of barangay development plans;
 - iv. Delivery of basic services and program implementation;
 - v. Disaster risk reduction and management, and community resilience;
- c. Continuing Education, including updates on relevant laws, policies, jurisprudence, and best practices in local governance;
 - d. Community Engagement and Participatory Governance, including mechanisms for citizen participation, transparency, and accountability;
 - e. Digital Governance and Innovation, including the use of digital tools in service delivery, data management, and public communication.

A Barangay Capacity Development Fund is hereby established for the implementation of this Section. The initial amount necessary for its implementation shall be charged against any available appropriations of the DILG and other concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 7. *Scholarship Grant.* - Every barangay shall sponsor at least one (1) scholarship grant every year leading to any bachelor's degree to be awarded by a committee of five (5) persons appointed by the Sangguniang Barangay with the approval of the Punong Barangay after competitive examinations are given to applicants who should be *bona fide* residents of the barangay. The grant shall include tuition fees and all other school fees, reasonable allowances for school books, supplies, transportation, and other expenses as the barangay may deem appropriate.

Section 8. *Preference for Barangay Residents.* - Barangays shall have the authority to prioritize qualified residents in employment opportunities arising from projects implemented within their jurisdiction.

Section 9. *Cooperative Enterprise.* - Cooperative enterprises in the barangay shall be encouraged, and every barangay is directed to give full assistance for the establishment and organization of said enterprises and to take every possible effort to make cooperative undertakings a way of life in the barangay.

Section 10. *Supportive Role of National Government.* - The Department of the Interior and Local Government and other national agencies shall issue implementing

OR SURGICAL EXPENSES, MEDICINES, X-RAY, LABORATORY FEES, AND OTHER HOSPITAL EXPENSES; AND

E. EXEMPTION DURING INCUMBENCY FROM PAYING TUITION AND MATRICULATION FEES FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE DEPENDENT CHILDREN ATTENDING STATE COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES. HE OR SHE MAY LIKEWISE AVAIL OF SUCH EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS IN A STATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY LOCATED WITHIN THE PROVINCE OR CITY TO WHICH THE BARANGAY BELONGS."

Section 6. *Barangay-Driven Capacity Development.* - For the purpose of strengthening barangay governance as the primary planning, implementing, and service delivery unit of government, all barangay officials shall undergo mandatory training programs prior to the assumption of their duties. During their incumbency, they shall be required to attend continuing capacity development programs to enhance their competence in governance, administration, and public service delivery.

Deliberate failure to attend the required training programs shall constitute sufficient ground for the imposition of appropriate administrative sanctions, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the Department of Finance (DOF), the Commission on Audit (COA), and other relevant agencies, with the assistance of the Local Government Academy (LGA), the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), and other accredited institutions, shall jointly design and implement the mandatory and continuing training programs for barangay officials.

Such programs shall include, but not be limited to, the following components:

- a. Foundational Knowledge on Local Governance, including:
 - i. The Local Government Code of 1991 and related laws;
 - ii. Principles of decentralization, devolution, and local autonomy;
 - iii. Roles, powers, duties, and ethical standards of barangay officials;
- b. Capability Building, including:
 - i. Local legislation and ordinance drafting;
 - ii. Fiscal management, budgeting, procurement, and financial accountability;

rules that facilitate barangay autonomy, limit unnecessary approvals, and emphasize technical assistance over control.

Section 11. *Budgetary Estimates.* - The Secretary of the Interior and Local Government shall submit to Congress the necessary budgetary estimates to implement the provisions of this Act concerning the allowances, insurance, medical, dental, and retirement benefits, and other fringe benefits of barangay officials, the basic priorities in the barangays, and the barangay scholarship grant.

Section 12. *Protection Against Undue Interference.* - Any person who shall willfully interfere with, restrain, or coerce any barangay official or barangay resident in the exercise of his or her rights guaranteed by this Act or who shall in any other manner commit any act to defeat any of the provisions of this Act shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not less than Five hundred pesos (P500.00) nor more than Two thousand pesos (P2,000.00), or imprisonment of six (6) months and one (1) day, or both, subject to the discretion of the court.

If the offender is a public official, the court shall order his or her dismissal from the government service.

Section 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

Section 14. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder shall not be affected.

Section 15. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 16. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,