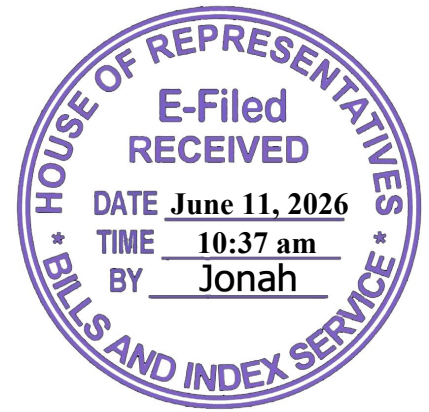


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9853



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Agriculture remains the backbone of the Philippine economy, yet our farmers consistently face crippling challenges in transporting their produce from farm to market. Post-harvest losses in the Philippines reach up to 15% to 30% for high-value crops, largely due to delays and damage caused by unpaved, uneven, and poorly lit local roads.

When farmers cannot transport perishable goods efficiently, food prices spike in urban centers while farmgate prices drop, trapping agricultural workers in a cycle of poverty and threatening national food security. Furthermore, the lack of adequate street lighting along these rural transit corridors forces farmers to transport goods only during peak daytime hours, exposing crops to extreme heat and contributing to daytime traffic congestion.

This bill, the "Agri-Market Infrastructure and Solar Lighting Act," seeks to mandate the prioritization of paving and solar-lighting critical arterial roads that directly connect agricultural zones to commercial markets.

By aggressively paving these arterial roads, we reduce travel time, minimize product bruising, and lower vehicle maintenance costs for transport groups. By integrating solar-powered street lighting, we empower farmers to safely transport their harvests during the cooler nighttime and pre-dawn hours. This not only preserves the freshness of the produce but also promotes the use of sustainable, off-grid renewable energy that does not strain the national power grid or local municipal budgets.

Securing our food supply chain begins with securing the roads our farmers travel. Hence, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9853

Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

AN ACT
PRIORITIZING THE PAVING AND SOLAR-LIGHTING OF CRITICAL
ARTERIAL ROADS CONNECTING AGRICULTURAL ZONES TO COMMERCIAL
MARKETS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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 "Agri-Market Infrastructure and Solar Lighting Act."

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to promote agricultural development, ensure national food security, and uplift the economic well-being of farmers. Towards this end, the State shall prioritize the construction, paving, and modernization of infrastructure linking agricultural production zones to commercial markets. The State also recognizes the necessity of adopting sustainable and renewable energy solutions, such as solar power, to secure the safety and efficiency of rural transport networks.

Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – as used in this Act,

1. Agricultural Zones: Areas designated by the Department of Agriculture (DA) or local government units (LGUs) as primary sites for crop cultivation, livestock raising, or fisheries.
2. Critical Arterial Roads: Provincial, city, or municipal roads that serve as the primary transport routes from farms to trading posts, processing centers, or commercial markets.
3. Solar-Lighting System: Stand-alone, off-grid public street illumination powered by solar photovoltaic panels.

Sec. 4. *Prioritization Program.* – The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in strict coordination with the Department of Agriculture (DA), is hereby mandated to prioritize the funding, design, and execution of paving projects for all unpaved critical arterial roads connecting agricultural zones to commercial markets.

Sec. 5. *Inter-Agency Coordination* – To effectively implement the provisions of this Act, the following agencies shall execute specific mandates:

- Department of Agriculture (DA): Shall identify and submit an annually updated master list of the most critical unpaved arterial roads utilized by farmers and agribusinesses, ranked by the volume of agricultural transport.
- Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH): Shall serve as the primary implementing agency for the road paving and infrastructure construction.
- Department of Energy (DOE): Shall establish the technical standards and specifications for the durable, weather-resistant solar-lighting systems to be installed.

Sec. 6. *Integration of Solar Lighting.* – All road paving projects executed under this Act shall strictly include the installation of solar-powered street lighting along the entire stretch of the newly paved road. The DPWH is prohibited from turning over completed projects to the respective Local Government Units (LGUs) unless the solar-lighting systems are fully operational. Maintenance of these lighting systems post-turnover shall be the responsibility of the receiving LGU.

Sec. 7. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DPWH and the DA. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Sec. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DPWH, the Secretary of the DA, and the Secretary of the DOE, in consultation with the League of Provinces of the Philippines and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances and other administrative rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Sec. 11. *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,