



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS

Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 10623

Introduced by Representatives

Reynante U. Arrogancia, 3rd District of Quezon Province

Keith Micah DL. Tan, 4th District of Quezon Province

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Access to reliable and affordable electricity remains indispensable to countryside development, local enterprise, education, health services, and the general welfare of households and communities. In the municipalities covered by this proposed measure, the Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (QUEZELCO I) has long served as the primary electric distribution utility, bringing power service to communities across the 3rd and 4th Districts of Quezon Province and to the Municipality of Del Gallego in Camarines Sur.

QUEZELCO I was established on April 24, 1972 and became the 22nd electric cooperative in the Philippines. Headquartered in Brgy. Poctol, Pitogo, Quezon, it was organized as a non-stock, non-profit electric cooperative and has since expanded its service from its original coverage of six towns to the present franchise area composed of the Municipalities of Agdangan, Alabat, Atimonan, Buenavista, Calauag, Catanauan, Gen. Luna, Guinayangan, Gumaca, Lopez, Macalelon, Mulanay, Padre Burgos, Perez, Pitogo, Plaridel, Quezon, San Andres, San Francisco, San Narciso, Tagkawayan, and Unisan, all in the Province of Quezon, and the Municipality of Del Gallego, Province of Camarines Sur.

Through the years, QUEZELCO I has played a critical role in rural electrification and socio-economic development. Its service area covers hundreds of barangays, including island and coastal communities that

require specialized infrastructure to ensure continuous power delivery. Notably, the Cooperative serves the municipalities of Alabat, Perez, and Quezon on Alabat Island, which are connected to the mainland power grid through a submarine cable system. It has likewise implemented distribution and reliability projects, including the energization of barangays in Padre Burgos through a three-phase submarine cable under the Barangay Line Enhancement Program.

QUEZELCO I has also shown marked operational improvement. From 2020 to 2024, its energy procurement increased from 217,423,723.93 kWh to 278,780,436.58 kWh, reflecting the rising electricity requirements of its service area. At the same time, it significantly reduced system loss from 17.83% in 2018 to 9.43% by 2024, indicating improved efficiency, better technical controls, and stronger system management. The Cooperative has also maintained affordable rates, with its lowest recorded rate in 2024 at Php 9.6786/kWh, while serving approximately 226,433 household connections.

These gains have been recognized by the National Electrification Administration. QUEZELCO I attained Category A status in 2019 after many years in lower categories and later achieved NEA's highest Category AAA rating in 2022. It has also received recognitions from NEA, PHILRECA, and the Bureau of Internal Revenue, including awards for improved and outstanding performance.

The grant of a legislative franchise to QUEZELCO I will provide the necessary authority and stability for the Cooperative to continue constructing, installing, establishing, operating, owning, managing, and maintaining electric power distribution systems in its coverage area. More importantly, it will ensure the uninterrupted delivery of electricity to households, businesses, public institutions, and communities that depend on QUEZELCO I for essential electric service.

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



REYNANTE U. ARROGANCIA
3rd District of Quezon Province



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AN ACT

GRANTING THE QUEZON I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (QUEZELCO I) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, OWN, MANAGE, AND MAINTAIN ELECTRIC POWER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF ELECTRICITY TO END-USERS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF AGDANGAN, ALABAT, ATIMONAN, BUENAVISTA, CALAUAG, CATANAUAN, GEN. LUNA, GUINAYANGAN, GUMACA, LOPEZ, MACALELON, MULANAY, PADRE BURGOS, PEREZ, PITOGO, PLARIDEL, QUEZON, SAN ANDRES, SAN FRANCISCO, SAN NARCISO, TAGKAWAYAN, AND UNISAN, ALL IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEZON, AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF DEL GALLEGO, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR

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 Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (QUEZELCO
4 I) hereunder referred to as the Grantee, its successors or assigns a franchise
5 to construct, install, establish, operate, own, manage and maintain in the
6 public interest and commercial purposes, a distribution system for the
7 conveyance of electric power to the end-users in the Municipalities of
8 Agdangan, Alabat, Atimonan, Buenavista, Calauag, Catanauan, Gen. Luna,

1 Guinayangan, Gumaca, Lopez, Macalelon, Mulanay, Padre Burgos, Perez,
2 Pitogo, Plaridel, Quezon, San Andres, San Francisco, San Narciso,
3 Tagkawayan, and Unisan, all in the Province of Quezon, and the Municipality
4 of Del Gallego, Province of Camarines Sur.

5 As used in this Act, distribution system refers to the system of wires
6 and associated facilities including sub-transmission lines belonging to a
7 franchised distribution utility extending between the delivery point on the
8 national transmission system or generating facility and the metering point or
9 facility of the end-users.

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

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

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

33 **SEC. 4. Excavation and Restoration Works.** – For the purpose of
34 erecting and maintaining the poles or other supports for said facilities, wires
35 or other conductors or for the purpose of laying and maintaining said
36 facilities, wires, cables or other conductors, it shall be lawful for the Grantee,
37 its successors, or assignees, in coordination with the Department of Public
38 Works and Highways (DPWH) or the local government unit (LGU) concerned,
39 as may be appropriate, to make excavations or lay conduits in any of the

1 public places, highways, road, streets, lanes, alleys, avenues, sidewalks, or
2 bridges of the province, cities or municipalities: *Provided, however,* That a
3 public place, highway, road, street, lane, alley, avenue, sidewalk, or bridge
4 disturbed, altered, or changed by reason of erection of poles or other supports
5 or the underground laying of wires, other conductors or conduits, shall be
6 repaired and replaced in workmanlike manner by the Grantee, its successors
7 or assignees, in accordance with the standards set by the DPWH or the local
8 government unit concerned. Should the Grantee, its successors or assignees,
9 after the ten (10)-day notice from the grant of authority, fail, refuse or neglect
10 to repair or replace any part of public place, highway, road, street, lane, alley,
11 avenue, sidewalk, or bridge altered, changed or disturbed by the said Grantee,
12 its successors or assignees, then the DPWH or the local government unit
13 concerned shall have the right to have the same repaired and replaced in good
14 order and condition and charge the Grantee, its successors or assignees,
15 double the amount of the cost and expenses for such repair or replacement.

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

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

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

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

39 **SEC. 7. Promotion of Consumer Interests.** – The Grantee herein shall

1 establish a consumer desk that will handle consumer complaints and ensure
2 adequate promotion of consumer interests. The Grantee shall act with
3 dispatch on all complaints brought before it.

4 **SEC. 8. Commitment to Provide and Promote the Creation of**
5 **Employment Opportunities.** – The Grantee shall create employment
6 opportunities and shall allow on-the-job training in its franchise operation:
7 *Provided*, That priority shall be accorded to the residents where their principal
8 office is located: *Provided, further*, That the Grantee shall comply with the
9 applicable labor standards and allowance entitlement under existing labor
10 laws, rules and regulations, and similar issuances.

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

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

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

36 **SEC. 12. Warranty in Favor of the National and Local**
37 **Governments.** – The Grantee shall hold the national, provincial, city, and
38 municipal governments of the Philippines free from all claims, accounts,
39 demands, or actions arising from accidents causing injury to persons or

1 damage to properties, during the construction, installation, operation, and
2 maintenance of the distribution system of the Grantee.

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

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

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

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

39 **SEC. 17. Equality Clause.** – Any advantage, favor, privilege,

1 exemption, or immunity granted under existing franchises, or which may
2 hereafter be granted, upon prior review and approval of Congress, shall
3 become part of this franchise and shall be accorded immediately and
4 unconditionally to the herein Grantee: *Provided, however*, That the foregoing
5 shall neither apply to nor affect provisions concerning territory covered by the
6 franchise, the life span of the franchise or the type of service authorized by
7 the franchise: *Provided, further*, That the foregoing shall not apply to the sale,
8 lease, transfer, grant of usufruct, or assignment of legislative franchises with
9 prior congressional approval.

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

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

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

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

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

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

33 *Approved,*