

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **9274**



Introduced by Representative MANUEL ANTONIO F. ZUBIRI

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Rice, sugar, coconuts, abaca, pineapples, banana, mangoes, corn and rubber are the primary produce of the Philippines. Most of these produces are what the Philippines exports thus contributing to country's GDP. However, in 2020, the contributions of these crops including forestry and fishing has declined (CPBRD, 2020).

For 2020 however, the general appropriations of the Department of Agriculture (DA) stood at a minimal 1.7%--compared to Indonesia's 3.4%, Thailand's 3.6% and Vietnam's 6.5%. A miniscule share of the budget pie, considering that the sector contributes about 10% to the country's GDP and employs around 1/3 of the Filipino labor force (www.da.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-Year-end-Report.pdf). The difference of the aforementioned countries' allocations in relation to the nation's budget allocation are 1.7%, 1.9% and 4.8% respectively or an average of 2.8% difference.

Thus, there is a need to transform the agri-food systems and build sustainable agriculture and reverse decades of underinvestment and ravages brought about by the elements in the sector especially that the GDP for the fourth quarter of 2020 maintained a growth rate of -8.3% while the annual growth rate of GDP for 2020 was revised downward from -9.5% to 9.6% (PSA Press Release, 08 April 2021).

As such, in order to increase the productivity of this sector and provide the protection deserved by all workers in the sector as well as access to investments in research and application of modern technologies towards food security, a yearly increasing allotment in the budget of the DA which is commensurate with the needs of the nation in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) is needed.

The passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

MANUEL ANTONIO F. ZUBIRI
Representative
Third District, Bukidnon

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AN ACT
PROVIDING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE A YEARLY INCREASE
BASED ON ITS PREVIOUS YEAR'S TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE NEXT THREE (3)
YEARS IN ITS YEARLY ALLOTMENT IN THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. – The Department of Agriculture (DA) shall hereby be provided a yearly increase in its budget in the General Appropriations Act (GAA), based on its previous year's total budget, to revive the agricultural sector as well as enable access in the promotion of its measures and modernization. Such increase shall be commensurate with the needs of the department in meeting its priority goals in relation to the priority needs of the government.

The Department is hereby authorized to re-align its appropriations upon the effectivity of this Act to conform with its mandate.

Section 2. Oversight. – The Oversight Committee shall submit periodic reports on its findings and make recommendations on actions to be taken by Congress and the appropriate department to properly evaluate the propriety of the yearly increase.

Section 3. Inter-Agency Participation. – The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall propose a budget of the DA to the Office of the President (OP) which shall not be lower or equal to the DA's budget for the previous year for inclusion of the OP's recommended budget for the enactment of GAA.

Section 4. Automatic Review. – At the end of the third year after the effectivity of this Act, an independent review committee composed of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to be appointed by the President shall review the policies and programs of the DA and shall hereinafter make recommendations, based on its findings, to the President and to both Houses of Congress on whether the latter should enact another legislation to continue the implementation of this Act.

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

Section 6. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders and their implementing rules, inconsistent with the provision of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 7. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.