



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
QUEZON CITY, METRO MANILA



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 10097

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Introduced by Representative **SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES**

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### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This Bill seeks to create a full-fledged Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) field office in General Santos City, with complete manpower complement and budget allocation in the annual General Appropriations Act, just like the way other city and provincial offices of the DTI operate. Currently, the DTI in General Santos City is operating only as a satellite office of DTI Regional Office XII with a Division Chief as the highest-ranked officer serving as Caretaker.

General Santos City has a total land area of 492.82 square kilometers with a population of 594,446 inhabitants and an average annual population growth rate of 1.91% based on PSA 2015 census. The then municipality was chartered as a city on 05 June 1968 and has been declared as a highly-urbanized city on 05 September 1988. With the passage and approval of R.A. 11243 on 11 March 2019, the First Legislative District of South Cotabato has been reapportioned, thus, creating the Lone Legislative District of General Santos City.

General Santos City plays a vital role in the economy of Mindanao. Based on 2019 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index Survey, General Santos City is considered as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Most Competitive Highly-Urbanized City in Mindanao. General Santos City, being the only highly-urbanized city in the South Central Mindanao and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in Mindanao, is the hub of commerce and trade in SOCCSKSARGEN or Region XII. It has four (4) major gateways: the international airport, seaport, fish port, and land transport hub.

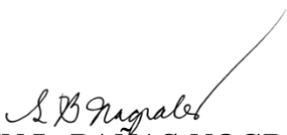
The city owed its growth and development from hosting major industries that include agribusiness, banking, e-services, tourism, manufacturing, and trading. The city's export value in 2019 amounted to US\$1.06 billion mainly from fresh and canned tuna, fresh and canned pineapple, and crude coconut oil. The city is home to seven (7) out of eight (8) tuna processing plants in the country. It is also hosting the highest number of business establishments in Region XII that reached to 11,386, and the highest number of banking institutions, hospitals, DOT-accredited hotels, and malls in the entire region.

Through the years, the DTI Regional Office XII Satellite Office in General Santos City posted the highest number of registered businesses in the region at an average of 10,200 registrants per year, or functioning on personnel to client ratio of 1:927 which is higher compared to the other full-fledged DTI offices operating within the region. In addition to its local clientele, the DTI satellite office is also serving the clients coming from the provinces of Sarangani, South Cotabato, Davao Del Sur and Davao Occidental who would prefer to do business transactions at the satellite office, i.e., business name registration, owing to the city's geographical advantage and accessibility, and the presence of the most number of finance, service, and retail industries in the region.

The facilitation of a full-fledged DTI office in the city in terms of intervention and participation to the international issues and export promotion of the tuna industry cannot be overemphasized. The trade and commerce conferences and meetings in the region are mostly held in General Santos City, thus, requires the representation of director level from the DTI. Moreover, as the city now becoming a host to the growing community of business start-ups and emerging as the regional center of ICT industry, the DTI satellite office needs sufficient numbers of personnel to work for the enormous job.

Finally, the tremendous impact of Covid-19 pandemic to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which comprises about 99.5% of all the businesses in the country, necessitates various interventions and initiatives from the government and private sectors. In order for the MSMEs in the city to recover fast enough as the recovery stage is now on its way, it is vital to provide a venue where a complete package of assistance will be provided with advisories on business registration, product development and promotion, and a venue to develop innovativeness among MSMEs to cope and sustain their business under the new normal. But we would like to believe that these much needed and urgent interventions cannot be dispensed with dispatch because of the limited capability presently besetting the DTI satellite office in General Santos City.

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

  
**SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES**



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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**  
**FIELD OFFICE IN GENERAL SANTOS CITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS**  
**THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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Introduced by Representative **SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES**

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

**Section 1.** There shall be established the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Field Office in General Santos City.

**Section 2.** The Department of Trade and Industry Field Office shall be headed by a City Director to be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The organizational structure and additional plantilla positions to be created under this Act shall be determined by the Department of Trade and Industry, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission.

**Section 3.** The amount necessary to carry out the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Trade and Industry for the current fiscal year. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the operation and maintenance of the DTI Field Office in General Santos City shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**Section 4.** Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Trade and Industry shall prepare the rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

**Section 5.** All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

**Section 6.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,