

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 141

Introduced by the Honorable Victoria Isabel G. Noel

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The islands that make up the Philippine archipelago is green with the graceful leaves of the coconut tree. Sixty-eight of the seventy-nine provinces of the country are coconut areas. Of 12 million hectares of farmland, 3.1 million hectares easily a fourth, are coconut grown. The coconut industry is expectedly one of the major sources of employment generation. Supposed to be one of the leading industries, it is strongly depended upon for foreign exchange earnings.

But it has not given its full potential. The late Hon. Ramon Mitra, erstwhile Secretary of Agriculture, statesman and at one time Speaker of the House sought to correct the matter by filing HB 32445 during the 8th Congress. Unfortunately, for reasons now difficult to explain the bill did not become a law. Over the years stagnation has characterized the industry. Starting with senile or badly unhealthy trees that give very low yield, costly and outdated processing methods that result in inferior quality copra oil, the industry declined. No advantage has been taken of the many high value by-products that coconut oil can give through technological development

Clearly, there is an urgent need for an agency mandated to oversee and supervise an integrated approach that will result in the coconut industry producing and yielding all it can. This agency if it is to succeed must be properly manned and full funded so it can be the source of needed economic uplift the country badly needs.

Interested experts, pundits in science and technology, as well as knowledgeable economic gurus have enumerated factors that need immediate attention if the Philippines desire to be globally competitive, specifically in the copra oil industry. First low yield, poor quality trees have to be substantially improved by continuous study and experimentation. Added to this extensive research for more and improved coco by-products must be sustained germane to this a close study of improved copra soil extraction and processing and needs to be given priority. In this way can high value copra oil be guaranteed to produce downstream excellent coco

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products. Then knowledgeable marketing strategies and strong credit institutions need to be brought in.

Our tree of life, properly nurtured and never neglected, can ensure a sustained quality of life for always employed farmers, lessees and tillers who all can in the process be direct participants in and beneficiaries of the industry. On this industry, its viability and sustained improvement in the areas of production processing and marketing and intensive research depends and can well guarantee the economic well being of a major part of the country's population. In view of the foregoing immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

This proposed measure was filed in the previous congress. It was referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Food, and further refined by the Technical Working Group (TWG) created by the same. The bill however did not pass into law due to lack of material time.


VICTORIA ISABEL G. NOEL

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AN ACT
REVITALIZING THE COCONUT INDUSTRY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

ARTICLE I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “*The Coconut Industry Development Act of 2016.*”

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize the essential role of coconut as a strategic, indigenous, replenishable and renewable source of livelihood for a great number of people.

Towards this end, the State shall promote the rapid, steady and continuous integrated development and growth of the coconut industry in all its aspects and ensure that the coconut farmers, farm workers, processors, lessees and tillers, and their families,

shall become direct participants in, and beneficiaries of, such development and growth thereby increasing their income and uplifting their quality of life.

SEC. 3. *Goals and Objectives.* – Pursuant to the above-mentioned policy, the effort of government shall be directed towards the following goals and objectives:

- a) Promote the steady, accelerated and orderly development of the coconut industry consistent with the agrarian reform policy of the government;
- b) Develop and establish the coconut based farming systems including but not limited to the establishment of model coconut farms;
- c) Hasten and advance industrialization in the coconut industry and the diversification and proper utilization of coconut products and by-products;
- d) Promote the effective utilization and marketing of coconut products and by-products in the domestic and foreign markets and preserve the competitiveness and reliability of the country as a major producer and supplier of said products, by establishing national standards acceptable in the international market
- e) To increase production by expanding the planting and replanting program of coconut trees in strategic areas identified as having the most potential;
- f) Conduct scientific researches and investigations in all areas pertaining to agricultural, industrial, marketing and socio-economic aspect of the coconut industry and encourage the participation of small farm holders in research and technology;
- g) Encourage and promote the organization of coconut farmers cooperatives, associations, and organizations and provide them credit and financing schemes;

h) Generate and disseminate information and communication to farmers, producers and other sectors to ensure the appreciation and adoption of appropriate technology and practices, inventions, as well as the proper awareness and correct understanding of issues and development in the coconut industry; and

i) Coordinate and integrate all efforts of various agencies of government and provide general direction for the steady and orderly development of the industry.

ARTICLE II

PHILIPPINE COCONUT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

SEC. 4. *Philippine Coconut Industry Development Authority.* – To implement the policy and objectives of this Act, there is hereby created and established a corporate body known as the Philippine Coconut Industry Development Authority (PHILCIDA), hereinafter referred to as the Authority.

SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions.* – The Authority shall exercise the following powers and functions:

a) Formulate and adopt a general program of development geared towards increased farm productivity, through planting or replanting of suitable seedling varieties, rehabilitation and fertilization of coconut, integrated coconut-based farming systems and product processing, and whenever necessary, the construction of related support and infrastructure facilities. For this purpose, the Authority shall adopt a special program to maximize the yield of small coconut farmers and their

farm families particularly those farms covered by the agrarian reform program of the government:

b) Undertake scientific researches and investigations on crop and varietal improvement, pests and diseases, agronomy and mineral nutrition, coconut wood utilization, virology and biochemistry and epidemiology of *cadang-cadang*, and such other similar studies on varietal and crop improvement of general or local suitability;

c) Undertake scientific researches and investigations on food, non-food products and by-products including bio-diesel, directly or in collaboration with other public agencies or the private sector;

d) Establish, maintain and operate such number of research centers and experiment stations, including laboratories, seed gardens, nurseries, pilot farms and industrial facilities as may be necessary to undertake extensive research in coconut pests and diseases, improvement of copra, manufacture of coconut products and by-products and the greater utilization of the coconut for traditional and non-traditional uses;

e) Purchase or fabricate such machineries, material, equipment and supplies as may be necessary to execute successfully such researches, investigations and experimental work as provided under this Act on its own or in partnership with other agencies:

f) Conduct intensive studies and data research, establish and maintain a database of primary, accurate and reliable information on coconut culture,

