

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

13 OCT -2 AM 11:43

SENATE
S. No. 1770

RECEIVED BY: *J*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Reliable and accessible information on the weather is essential for agricultural producers. It is an important factor in crop planning and management. The type of crop to be planted is mainly dependent on existing weather and climactic conditions. Certain types of crops are suitable only for the wet season and will not thrive during the dry season.

Accurate weather information is also significant in minimizing the losses caused by extreme changes in the weather condition. These weather disturbances usually occur unexpectedly. Every year, agricultural crops worth millions of pesos are lost/damaged by such unforeseen weather disturbances. These losses are caused by the lack or inadequacy of weather information that will enable agricultural producers to take the necessary precaution against natural calamities.

This bill seeks the establishment of an Agricultural Weather Office which shall be responsible for the collection and distribution of weather information that will address the needs of agricultural producers.*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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* This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress, First Regular Session.



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1 AN ACT
2 PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AGRICULTURAL WEATHER OFFICE

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

3 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “National Agricultural
4 Weather Information Act.”

5 SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act, the term:

- 6 (A) “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture;
- 7 (B) “Director” means the Director of the Agricultural Weather Office; and
- 8 (C) “Office” means the Agricultural Weather Office.

9 SECTION 3. *Establishment of the Agricultural Weather Office.* –

10 (A) *Establishment Required.* – The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish within the
11 Department of Agriculture an Agricultural Weather Office to plan and administer the National
12 Agricultural Weather Information System. The System shall be comprised of the Office
13 established under this section and the activities of the Regional Agricultural Weather Information
14 Systems described in Section 8 of this Act.

15 (B) *Director.* – The Secretary shall appoint a Director to manage the activities of the
16 Agricultural Weather Office and to advise the Secretary on scientific and pragmatic coordination
17 for climate, weather, and remote sensing.

18 SECTION 4. *Authority.* – The Secretary, acting through the Office, may undertake the
19 following activities to carry out the provisions of this Act:

1 (A) Enter into cooperative projects with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical,
2 and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) and other related government agencies to

- 3 —
- 4 (1) Support operational weather forecasting and observation useful in agriculture;
5 (2) Sponsor joint workshops to train agriculturalists about the optimum utilization
6 of agricultural weather and climate data;
7 (3) Jointly develop improved computer models and computing capacity; and
8 (4) Enhance the quality and availability of weather and climate information
9 needed by agriculturalists;

10 (B) Obtain standardized weather observation data collected in near real time through
11 regional Agricultural Weather Information Systems;

12 (C) Make, through the Department of Science and Technology, competitive grants
13 under Section 6 of this Act for research in atmospheric science and climatology;

14 (D) Make grants to eligible provinces under Section 8 of this Act to plan and
15 administer Regional Agricultural Weather Information Systems;

16 (E) Coordinate the activities of the Office with the weather and climate research
17 activities of the Department of Science and Technology; and

18 (F) Encourage private sector participation in the National Agricultural Weather
19 Information System through mutually beneficial cooperation with the private sector particularly
20 in the generation of weather and climatic data useful for site-specific agricultural forecasting.

21 SECTION 5. *Weather Information Collection and Distribution to Agricultural*
22 *Producers.* —

23 (A) As one of the cooperative projects authorized by Section 4(1), the Secretary of
24 Agriculture shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary of Science and Technology to use
25 PAGASA's regional offices to collect, organize, and distribute information aimed at meeting the
26 short-term and long-term weather and climate information needs of agricultural producers.

27 (B) *Information Collection.* — The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of
28 Science and Technology shall jointly develop a system for the collection by the PAGASA of

1 weather and climate information that is relevant to agricultural producers and available through
2 the Agricultural Weather Office and other related agencies, regional agricultural weather
3 information systems and other State programs, colleges and universities, and the private weather
4 consulting sector.

5 (C) *Methods of Distribution.* – Weather and climate information collected under this
6 section shall be distributed to agricultural producers through the use of –

7 (1) Weekly publications containing weather forecasts and other information
8 regarding anticipated temperatures and precipitation levels;

9 (2) Toll-free and local telephone numbers that agricultural producers can call to
10 obtain immediate information to assist with specific day-to-day production
11 activities; and

12 (3) Such other methods as the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of
13 Science and Technology considers appropriate to distribute such weather and
14 climate information to agricultural producers in a timely manner.

15 (D) *Report.* – Not later than one (1) year after the date of promulgation of this Act, the
16 Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Science and Technology shall jointly submit a
17 report to Congress analyzing the effectiveness of the cooperative project required by paragraph
18 (A) of this Section, in providing relevant weather and climate information to agricultural
19 producers. The report shall include a description of the number of agricultural producers who
20 obtained weather information through the project and an estimate of whether the project
21 improved farm profitability for participating producers.

22 SECTION 6. *Competitive Grants Program.* –

23 (A) *Grants Authorized.* – With funds allocated to carry out this Act, the Secretary may
24 make grants to State agricultural experiment stations, public/private colleges and universities
25 other research institutions and organizations, private organizations and corporations, and
26 individuals to carry out research in all aspects of atmosphere sciences and climatology that can be
27 shown to be important in a basic and developmental way to understanding, forecasting and
28 delivering agricultural weather information.

1 (B) *Competitive Basis.* – Grants made under this section shall be made on a
2 competitive basis.

3 (C) *Priority.* – In selecting among applications for grants under paragraph (A) of this
4 Section, the Secretary shall give priority to proposals which emphasize —

5 (1) Techniques and processes that relate to weather-induced agricultural losses,
6 and to improving the advisory information on weather extremes such as
7 drought, floods, and storms well in advance of their actual occurrence;

8 (2) The improvement of site-specific weather data collection and forecasting; or

9 (3) The impact of weather on economic and environmental costs in agricultural
10 production.

11 SECTION 7. *National Advisory Board on Agricultural Weather.* –

12 (A) *Establishment Required.* – The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish an
13 Advisory Board on Agricultural Weather (herein after referred to in this section as the “Board”)
14 to advise the Director of the Agricultural Weather Office with respect to carrying out the
15 provisions of this Act.

16 (B) *Composition.* – The Board shall be composed of nine (9) members, to be
17 appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture in consultation with the Secretary of Science and
18 Technology. Four (4) members shall come from the private sector, two (2) of whom shall be
19 agricultural producers, and the other two (2), agricultural or atmospheric scientists.

20 (C) *Chairperson.* – The Board shall elect a chairperson from among its members.

21 (D) *Term.* – Each Board member shall be appointed for a three-year term, except that
22 to ensure that members of the Board serve staggered terms, the Secretary shall appoint three (3)
23 of the original members of the Board for a term of one (1) year and another three (3) of the
24 original members for a term of two (2) years.

25 (E) *Meetings.* – The Board shall meet not less than twice annually.

26 (F) *Compensation.* – Members of the Board shall serve without compensation, but
27 while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the
28 Board, members of the Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including *per diem* allowance in

1 lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as individuals employed in Government service are
2 allowed travel expenses.

3 SECTION 8. *Regional Agricultural Weather Information Systems.* —

4 (A) *Advisory Program Grants.* — With funds allocated to carry out this Act, the
5 Secretary shall make grants to eligible provinces, each region (refers to the twelve (12) regions
6 of the Philippines and the autonomous regions created by law) to be represented by one (1)
7 province to plan and administer, in cooperation with persons described in the next paragraph,
8 advisory programs for regional agricultural weather information systems.

9 The persons referred to in the above paragraph are the Director of the Agricultural
10 Weather Office, the Director of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical
11 Services, and other persons as appropriate, such as the directors of the appropriate State
12 agricultural experiment stations and State extension programs.

13 (B) *Consultation.* — For purposes of selecting among applications submitted by
14 provinces for grants under this section, the Secretary shall take into consideration the
15 recommendation of the Advisory Board on Agricultural Weather and consult with the Director.

16 (C) *Eligibility Requirements.* — To be eligible to receive a grant under this Section, the
17 chief executive officer of a province shall submit to the Secretary an application that contains

18 (1) Assurances that the province will expend such grant to plan and administer a
19 Regional Agricultural Weather System that will —

20 (a) Collect observational weather data throughout the region and provide
21 such data to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and
22 Astronomical Services Administration and the Agricultural Weather
23 Office;

24 (b) Develop methods for packaging information received from the
25 national system for use by agricultural producers with the PAGASA
26 and the private sector to serve as the primary conduit of agricultural
27 weather forecasts and climatic information to producers; and

1 (c) Develop programs to educate agricultural producers on how to best use
2 weather and climate information to improve crop planning and
3 management decision; and

4 (2) Such other assurances and information as the Secretary may require by rule.

5 SECTION 9. *Appropriation.* – The amount of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) is
6 hereby appropriated to carry out the provisions of this Act. Subsequent appropriations for the
7 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

8 SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
9 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
10 valid and subsisting.

11 SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
12 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent
13 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

14 SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
15 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,