



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 6511

BY REPRESENTATIVES ROMUALDEZ (F.M.), ROMUALDEZ (Y.M.), ONGCHUAN, ACIDRE, OLIVAREZ, CO (E.), PALMA, REVILLA (R.J.), SAKALURAN, RECTO, CARI, ALBANO, KHO (W.), LARA, SOLON, BOSITA, TIENG, KHONGHUN, ESTRELLA, SALCEDA, LEE, GARCIA (A.), GARCIA (M.A.), NISAY, ESPARES, YAP (C.), YAP (C.T.), VELOSO-TUAZON, YU (D.G.) AND YU (J.V.), PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 204

AN ACT
CREATING THE EASTERN VISAYAS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EVDA),
DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Eastern Visayas
2 Development Authority (EVDA) Act”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State
4 to promote and accelerate the sound and balanced industrial, economic, and social
5 growth of Eastern Visayas and ensure its speedy rehabilitation in the aftermath of
6 typhoon Haiyan by increasing trade, tourism, and investments, encouraging private
7 enterprise, and advancing efforts towards progress and development within the
8 context of national plans and policies in order to provide jobs to the people,
9 especially those in rural areas, increase their productivity and their individual and
10 family incomes, and thereby improve the quality of their living conditions.

11 Towards this end, an effective institutional mechanism shall be established
12 in order to address the need for a coordinated and integrated approach in the
13 formulation and implementation of plans, programs, and projects geared towards

1 economic growth and development in the Eastern Visayas region, including the
2 establishment, among others, of special economic zones.

3 **SEC. 3. Creation.** – The Eastern Visayas Development Authority,
4 hereinafter referred to as the Authority, is hereby created, which shall promote,
5 coordinate, and facilitate the active and extensive participation of all sectors in the
6 socioeconomic development of Eastern Visayas.

7 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** – The Authority shall cover all the provinces of Northern
8 Samar, Eastern Samar, Western Samar, Leyte, Biliran and Southern Leyte, the
9 independent City of Ormoc and the highly urbanized City of Tacloban.

10 **SEC. 5. Main Office.** – The Authority shall have its main office in Tacloban
11 City. It may also establish satellite offices in Metro Manila and in the other
12 provinces within Eastern Visayas, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of this
13 Act.

14 **SEC. 6. Purpose.** – The Authority shall have the following purposes and
15 objectives:

16 (a) To promote the development of Eastern Visayas by initiating or
17 undertaking, by itself or otherwise, development and business projects
18 of corporate, economic nature whether in agriculture, power,
19 infrastructure, energy, public utilities, land development, manufacturing,
20 exploration or utilization of natural resources, and other fields or projects;

21 (b) To integrate government and private sector efforts and resources in the
22 pursuit of sustainable development and balanced growth of Eastern
23 Visayas, as proposed in the post-Haiyan rehabilitation plan and other
24 relevant development plans, programs and projects;

25 (c) To facilitate investments in any field as would enhance the economic
26 development of the region;

27 (d) To provide a model for the full implementation of a comprehensive
28 regional industrialization and agricultural modernization policy.

29 **SEC. 7. Powers and Functions of the Authority.** – The Authority shall
30 have the following powers and functions:

31 (a) Formulate an integrated development framework for Eastern Visayas
32 that is, as far as practicable, consistent with the peace and development
33 initiatives of the national government;

34 (b) Provide strategic direction for the long-term economic development of
35 Eastern Visayas;

- 1 (c) Integrate, prioritize, program, and implement, whenever allowed and
2 authorized by applicable laws, specific programs, activities and projects
3 within Eastern Visayas, including Official Development Assistance
4 (ODA) projects, subject to such limitations prescribed by existing laws,
5 rules, and regulations;
- 6 (d) Recommend to, and whenever necessary, call upon the appropriate
7 agencies of the national government and any of its instrumentalities, to
8 provide the necessary technical support for, assistance and prioritization
9 in the implementation of agricultural, industrial, commercial,
10 infrastructure, environmental, tourism, and technological programs and
11 projects;
- 12 (e) Advocate to the constituents of Eastern Visayas, their elected
13 Representatives in Congress, and the national government, policies that
14 will foster the integrated and balanced development of Eastern Visayas;
- 15 (f) Promote and facilitate investments in any field that would enhance the
16 socioeconomic development of Eastern Visayas and uplift the living
17 standards of the people in close coordination with agencies primarily
18 mandated to undertake such functions;
- 19 (g) Explore sources for financing priority programs, projects, and activities
20 that are critical to the development of Eastern Visayas;
- 21 (h) Coordinate and facilitate the extension of necessary planning,
22 management, and technical assistance to prospective and existing
23 investors, to complement the efforts of agencies primarily mandated to
24 execute such functions;
- 25 (i) Establish a comprehensive and integrated database on Eastern Visayas
26 to support planning and decision making;
- 27 (j) Perform prior screening functions, as a condition precedent to the
28 approval by any national, provincial, or municipal government agency,
29 of any permit, license, lease, franchise, or concession for the operation
30 of any business or the exploitation, development, or utilization of natural
31 resources within Eastern Visayas;
- 32 (k) Negotiate and enter into management or consulting contracts with local
33 or foreign management consulting firms for the planning and
34 implementation of agricultural, tourism, and industrial development
35 projects in Eastern Visayas;

- 1 (l) Avail of the expertise of any particular employee, technician, or group of
2 persons in any bureau, office, or department of the national government
3 whose services are deemed urgently needed for the attainment of the
4 goals of the Authority, with the consent and approval of the department
5 head concerned;
- 6 (m) Conduct scientific experiments, investigation, and research to discover
7 economical and practical methods of increasing agricultural and
8 industrial production and other related endeavors;
- 9 (n) Encourage and organize cooperative ventures in agriculture, agri-
10 business, industry, tourism, and commerce and assist them by arranging
11 appropriate financing schemes, for their plans and projects;
- 12 (o) Monitor, evaluate, and formulate recommendations in the
13 implementation of Eastern Visayas-wide development programs,
14 activities and projects;
- 15 (p) Establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the timely implementation
16 of Eastern Visayas-wide projects, whenever necessary, including public-
17 private partnership;
- 18 (q) Review and recommend for approval by the National Economic and
19 Development Authority (NEDA) Board programs, projects, and plans by
20 the national government and donor agencies for implementation in
21 Eastern Visayas, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;
- 22 (r) Recommend the creation and supervise the development and operation
23 of special economic zones in Eastern Visayas according to the principles
24 and provisions set forth in this Act and Republic Act No. 7916, or the
25 Special Economic Zone Act of 1995, as amended;
- 26 (s) Interface with foreign assistance agencies and international aid
27 organizations, in coordination with the NEDA and other relevant national
28 government agencies, for the purpose of obtaining financing support,
29 grants and donations for its programs and projects;
- 30 (t) Receive and administer donations, contributions, grants, bequests or
31 gifts, in cash or in kind, from foreign governments, international
32 agencies, private entities and other sources, including ODA, to be used
33 in the development of Eastern Visayas, subject to existing laws, rules
34 and regulations;

- 1 (u) To sue and be sued, enter into contracts, acquire, purchase, hold, lease,
2 transfer, and dispose of property of any kind or nature to carry out the
3 purposes of this Act; and
- 4 (v) Discharge other functions that may be deemed necessary or as may be
5 provided by law.

6 In the discharge of its functions, the Authority shall ensure appropriate
7 consultation and coordination with the Eastern Visayas Regional Development
8 Council and other local development councils as well as with national government
9 agencies, local government units, accredited people's organizations, non-
10 government organizations and the private sector operating in Eastern Visayas.

11 The Authority, through the EVDA Chairperson, shall submit to the President
12 of the Philippines and both Houses of Congress annual reports on its
13 accomplishments and activities.

14 **SEC. 8. Board of Directors.** – The overall directions and thrusts of the
15 Authority shall be provided and approved, unless provided otherwise in this Act, by
16 a Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board. It shall be composed of
17 the following members:

- 18 (a) The Chairperson who shall be appointed by the President of the
19 Philippines;
- 20 (b) The Chairperson of the Eastern Visayas Regional Development Council
21 as *ex officio* member;
- 22 (c) A member of the Senate, upon designation by the Senate President,
23 who shall be an *ex officio* member;
- 24 (d) A member of the House of Representatives, chosen by the District
25 Representatives of the legislative districts comprising Eastern Visayas,
26 who shall be an *ex officio* member;
- 27 (e) The Regional President of the League of Municipalities-Eastern Visayas
28 Chapter;
- 29 (f) Three (3) private sector representatives to be appointed by the
30 President, upon the recommendation of the Board comprising of one (1)
31 representative each from the:
 - 32 1. Eastern Visayas business sector;
 - 33 2. Eastern Visayas academic sector; and
 - 34 3. Eastern Visayas non-government sector.

1 The term of office of the three (3) representatives from the private sector
2 shall be six (6) years: *Provided*, That at the initial appointment of such members,
3 the second member to be appointed shall only serve a term of four (4) years and
4 the third member to be appointed shall only serve a term of two (2) years: *Provided*,
5 *further*, That they shall continue to hold office until their successors shall have been
6 appointed. All vacancies, prior to the expiration of the term, shall be filled for the
7 unexpired term only.

8 The members of the Board shall be entitled to reimbursements for actual
9 and necessary expenses incurred, either for their attendance in the meetings of
10 the Board or in connection with other official business authorized by resolution of
11 the Board, subject to existing laws and regulations.

12 The term of the *ex officio* members including the Senator and the Member
13 of the House of Representatives shall correspond to their term as elected officials.

14 **SEC. 9. Functions of the Board of Directors.** – The Board of Directors
15 shall have the following functions:

16 (a) Provide direction and guidance for the work and thrusts of the Authority
17 for Eastern Visayas;

18 (b) Ensure that the goals and policies of the Authority are consistent with
19 the overall national development goals and objectives;

20 (c) Ensure that the programs of the Authority are consistent with regional
21 and local development plans, programs and projects and vice versa;

22 (d) Explore sources for financing of priority Eastern Visayas-wide
23 development;

24 (e) Create committees or task forces as may be deemed necessary for the
25 accomplishment of the plans, programs, projects and activities of the
26 Authority;

27 (f) Determine schedules, establish voting procedures, criteria for the
28 constitution of a quorum and other rules and regulations in the conduct
29 of Board meetings; and

30 (g) Perform such functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes
31 of this Act.

32 **SEC. 10. Executive Committee.** – The Board shall constitute an Executive
33 Committee from among its membership to act, for and on its behalf, when the

1 Board is not in session, on urgent matters as may be deemed necessary by the
2 Chairperson.

3 The following shall comprise the Executive Committee:

4 (a) The EVDA Chairperson as head;

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6 (b) The Eastern Visayas Regional Development Council (RDC)
7 Chairperson;

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9 (c) The Private Sector Representative from the business sector;

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11 (d) The Private Sector Representative from the academic sector; and

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13 (e) The Private Sector Representative from the non-government sector.

14 **SEC. 11. Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer.** – The Chairperson
15 shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the rank of
16 Undersecretary and shall act as Chief Executive Officer of the Authority. The
17 Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer shall serve a term of six (6) years from
18 the date of appointment unless removed for cause: *Provided*, That the person who
19 shall be appointed as Chairperson must be a Filipino citizen, of good moral
20 character, of proven probity and integrity and a holder of a degree in economics,
21 business, public administration, law, management or related fields, and with at
22 least five (5) years relevant experience preferably in the field of management or
23 public administration: *Provided, further*, That the appointee for Chairperson shall
24 have been a resident of Eastern Visayas for at least (5) years before the
25 appointment.

26 The Chairperson shall have the following duties and functions:

27 (a) Call and preside over meetings of the Board and see to it that the
28 policies, programs and rules and regulations are implemented properly;

29 (b) Call on technical experts to assist in the formulation and implementation
30 of a comprehensive and integrated development plan for Eastern
31 Visayas, investment programs and the preparation of investment
32 programming priorities, annual reports and other pertinent documents
33 approved by the Authority;

34 (c) Identify solutions to key issues and concerns, taking into account related
35 risks, relative impact, and affected parties in coordination with the Board
36 and key stakeholders;

- 1 (d) Advocate the goals, objectives, and programs of the Authority among
2 the various concerned sectors and stakeholders;
- 3 (e) Call on any agency, group, individual member of the Board, local
4 government unit, and host community to address issues and concerns
5 relating to the implementation of major programs, projects and activities;
- 6 (f) Supervise the monitoring and timely implementation of Eastern Visayas-
7 wide programs, projects and activities;
- 8 (g) Endorse to the Board all policy recommendations, plans, and programs
9 for its approval;
- 10 (h) Accept, on behalf of the Authority, donations, contributions, grants and
11 bequests or gifts, in cash or in kind, from members, foreign
12 governments, international agencies, private entities or any individual for
13 purpose that will realize the functions of the Authority;
- 14 (i) Supervise administrative operations including disbursement of any fund
15 of the Authority, subject to the usual accounting and auditing
16 procedures, and submit reports thereon;
- 17 (j) Execute and administer the policies and measures approved by the
18 Board;
- 19 (k) Appoint, remove, dismiss or otherwise discipline for cause, all
20 employees of the Authority in accordance with the standard guidelines
21 for recruitment, employment, and discipline in the Civil Service Code;
- 22 (l) Represent the Authority before other offices, agencies, and
23 instrumentalities of the government and with all persons and entities,
24 public or private;
- 25 (m) Sign agreements and ~~for~~ contracts on behalf of the Authority, including
26 those for services of experts and consultants, and other reports of
27 accountabilities of the Authority;
- 28 (n) Serve as *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors of the NEDA and
29 the TIEZA; and
- 30 (o) Perform such other functions that the Board may direct to carry out the
31 provisions of this Act.

1 **SEC. 12. Deputy Chairperson.** – The Chairperson shall be assisted by one
2 Deputy Chairperson, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines
3 upon the recommendation of the Chairperson, with the rank of Assistant Secretary.
4 The Deputy Chairperson shall have the same qualifications as the Chairperson
5 and shall perform such duties and functions as may be assigned by the
6 Chairperson or as provided for by law.

7 **SEC. 13. Executive Director.** – An Executive Director shall be appointed
8 by the President of the Philippines upon recommendation by the Chairperson:
9 *Provided*, That no person shall be appointed as Executive Director unless one is
10 a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of proven probity and integrity and a
11 holder of a degree in economics, business, public administration, law,
12 management or other related fields, and have at least five (5) years relevant
13 experience in said fields: *Provided, further*, That the appointee to the position of
14 Executive Director shall have been a resident of Eastern Visayas for five (5) years
15 prior to appointment, and has the requisite eligibilities for third level career service
16 position, pursuant to the career executive rank system: *Provided, finally*, That the
17 appointee shall reside in Eastern Visayas while serving in such office.

18 The Executive Director shall assist the Chairperson in carrying out the
19 functions of the Authority and shall, likewise, serve as the Secretary of the Board.

20 **SEC. 14. The Advisory Council.** – There is hereby constituted an EVDA
21 Advisory Committee to be composed of the following:

22 (a) The Chairperson as head;

23 (b) The Eastern Visayas RDC Chairperson;

24 (c) The District Representatives of the legislative districts comprising
25 Eastern Visayas;

26 (d) The Provincial Governors of the provinces comprising Eastern Visayas;

27 (e) The City Mayors of the independent cities in Eastern Visayas;

28 (f) The Regional Directors of the national line agencies with regional offices
29 in Eastern Visayas.

30 The Advisory Council shall convene at least once every six (6) months or
31 as often as necessary upon the call of the EVDA Chairperson, for advice or
32 consultation by the Authority on important matters related to Eastern Visayas.

33 **SEC. 15. Organizational Structure.** – The Board of Directors, upon the
34 recommendation of the Chairperson shall determine the organizational structure

1 and staffing pattern of the Authority, in accordance with the existing compensation
2 and position classification system and civil service laws, rules and regulations. The
3 Chairperson may reorganize the Authority and may create or abolish divisions,
4 units, or branches therein as the exigency of the affairs of the Authority may
5 require.

6 **SEC. 16. Merit System.** – All officials and employees of the Authority shall
7 be selected and appointed on the basis of merit and fitness in accordance with civil
8 service law, rules, and regulations. The recruitment, transfer, promotion, and
9 dismissal of all its personnel including temporary workers shall be governed by a
10 merit system that will be established by the Authority in compliance with existing
11 laws, rules and regulations.

12 **SEC. 17. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation
13 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

14 **SEC. 18. Transfer of Post-Haiyan Rehabilitation Funds.** – The authority,
15 control, and administration of funds, equipment and properties donated by foreign
16 governments, foreign and local non-profit agencies and foundations and private
17 entities to the National Government for the purpose of the rehabilitation of areas in
18 Eastern Visayas that were affected by Typhoon Haiyan, as well as all other funds
19 received or appropriated by the National Government for the same purpose are
20 hereby transferred to the Authority. Thereafter, the Authority shall exercise the sole
21 power of control and disposition of the rehabilitation funds, in accordance with the
22 provisions of this Act or until the purposes for which the said funds had been
23 donated are accomplished.

24 **SEC. 19. Formulation of the Eastern Visayas Development Master**
25 **Plan.** – Upon its organization, the Authority shall formulate and submit its
26 development master plan to the NEDA for integration into the Medium-Term
27 Philippine Development Plan and public investment program. The Eastern
28 Visayas Development Master Plan shall serve as the framework for the
29 accelerated and balanced development of Eastern Visayas, in accordance with the
30 aims and purposes of this Act.

31 **SEC. 20. Administrative Supervision.** – The Authority shall be under the
32 direct supervision of the President of the Philippines.

33 **SEC. 21. Interpretation.** – The powers, authorities and functions that are
34 vested in the Authority are intended to decentralize governmental functions and
35 authority and promote an efficient and effective working relationship between the
36 EVDA, the national government, and the local government units.

37 **SEC. 22. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Authority shall
38 promulgate the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within
39 sixty (60) days from the date of its approval.

1 **SEC. 23. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
2 unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected
3 shall continue to remain in full force and effect.

4 **SEC. 24. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules
5 and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of
6 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

7 **SEC. 25. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
8 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,