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**SENATE**

**Ps. Res. No. 897**

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**Introduced by Senator Manny Villar**

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO  
REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF R.A. NO. 8435 OTHERWISE KNOWN  
AS THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION ACT (AFMA) OF  
1997 AS AMENDED BY R.A. NO. 9281 PARTICULARLY THE PROVISIONS  
ON BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS AND THE THIRTY PERCENT (30%) SHARE  
OF THE BUDGET FOR IRRIGATION PROJECTS**

**WHEREAS**, R.A. No. 8435 as amended by R.A. No. 9281 as  
aforementioned was the government's response to develop and reform the  
country's agricultural industry. Thus, a portion of Article XII Section 1 paragraph  
2 states:

"The State shall promote industrialization and full employment based on  
sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries  
that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, and  
which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets."

**WHEREAS**, under Section 112 of the amended statute, the law requires  
an initial budget of P20 billion for the first year of its implementation and a  
continuing annual appropriation of P17 billion thereafter, until the year 2015  
which is an increment to the annual appropriated budget of the Department of  
Agriculture (DA);

**WHEREAS**, under Section 111 thereat, allocation and disbursement of  
thirty percent (30%) from said amount must be allocated and disbursed for  
irrigation projects as stipulated under the AFMA law;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines has a total rice land area of 4.1 million  
hectares and according to the figures culled from the National Irrigation  
Administration (NIA), only about 1.43 million hectares are irrigated either through  
national, communal or private irrigation systems, the same irrigation systems that  
were designed and developed in 1963;

**WHEREAS**, based on a December 2007 figures from NIA, irrigation in  
large tracts of farmlands especially in major rice-producing areas including  
among others Region III which has 229,627 hectares, Region II with 273,201  
hectares and Region XII with 209,548 hectares of farmlands respectively, are yet  
to be developed and provided with adequate irrigation systems;

**WHEREAS**, although it may be a welcome progress to put in more funds  
for the irrigation of the remaining un-irrigated farmlands, it is however, more  
cheaper and far more realizable at the shorter term for the government to focus

its investments on the repair, restoration and rehabilitation of the existing irrigation systems than build new ones;

**WHEREAS**, NIA reported that irrigation systems covering about 368,000 hectares of the 1.43 million hectares irrigated rice lands in the country are defective and that its restoration and rehabilitation would cost the government an estimated P22 billion;

**WHEREAS**, this translates to 368,000 hectares of waterless and unproductive rice lands and if pegged at 80 bags yield of palay per hectare, this would amount to a reduction of about 29.40 million bags of palay production per harvest which is not so good considering last year's rice crisis;

**WHEREAS**, according to NIA, irrigation facilities covering around 47,000 hectares of rice land that need re-irrigation, have already been reconstructed and/or rehabilitated in 2006;

**WHEREAS**, in spite of this positive development, NIA still needs P6 billion reconstruction and rehabilitation funds a year for the next three (3) years to completely restore the remaining defective irrigation facilities and put these idle rice lands into productive use again;

**WHEREAS**, the AFMA law which was enacted in 1997 is a landmark legislation that serves as the country's framework in pursuing the constitutional policy of agricultural modernization including the fisheries sector and for ensuring food security for some 80 million Filipinos however, it is now besieged with funding problems and is yet to receive its rightful share in the national budget as the law mandates;

**WHEREAS**, agricultural sector accounts for about one-fifth of the country's gross domestic product, while over one-third of the population is employed in agriculture or agriculture-related industries and the continuing weak and limited investments support by the government to this industry sector would run counter to the policies and objectives by which the law was principally created;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** to urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture and other appropriate Senate Committees to review the implementation of Republic Act No. 8435 otherwise known as the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997 as amended by Republic Act No. 9281 particularly the provisions on budget appropriations with the intent of formulating a mechanism that would ensure the allocation of the thirty percent (30%) share for irrigation projects.

Adopted,

  
MANNY VILLAR