

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )

'18 APR 18 P5:58

SENATE

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S. No. 1783

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Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

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AN ACT  
DESIGNATING THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AS  
CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION  
ADMINISTRATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4 OF REPUBLIC  
ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED

**Explanatory Note**

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is a government-owned and controlled corporation primarily responsible for irrigation development and management. It was created under Republic Act (RA) 3601 in 1963. Its charter was amended by Presidential Decree (PD) 552, s. 1974 and PD 1702, s. 1980. Both increased the capitalization and broadened the authority of the Agency. NIA aims to construct, operate and maintain irrigation systems consistent with integrated water resource management principles to improve agricultural productivity and increase farmers' income. NIA envisions that by 2020, it wholly transforms into a professional and efficient irrigation agency contributing to the inclusive growth of the country and in the improvement of the farmers' quality of life.

NIA was placed under the Office of the President (OP) upon its creation. Subsequently, it was attached to the Department of Public Works, Transportation, and Communication by virtue of PD 1, s. 1972. Fifteen (15) years after, the Administrative Code of 1987 attached NIA to both the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and Department of Agriculture (DA). Despite the said Administrative Code, NIA remained attached to DPWH. It was transferred back to OP in 1992 pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 22. A month after, it was attached to DA under Administrative Order No. 17 dated 14 October 1992. Again, in 2014, EO No. 165 transferred NIA together with the National Food Authority, Philippine Coconut Authority, and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority to the Office of the President and consequently designating the Presidential Assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization as chairman of the respective governing bodies of the abovementioned agencies. In a memorandum dated 3 November 2016 of the Executive Secretary, the Cabinet Secretary was designated as the Acting Chairman of the NIA Board of Directors.<sup>1</sup>

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, who, back in 2016 wanted NIA along with the National Food Authority, Philippine Coconut Authority and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority to be reintegrated back to the DA, said that there was "absolutely no sense in separating the NFA,

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<sup>1</sup> National Irrigation Administration. *Legislations*. Information retrieved on April 12, 2018 from <http://www.nia.gov.ph/?q=content/legislations>

NIA, FPA and PCA from the DA.”<sup>2</sup> What is worse is that the Secretary of Agriculture is not even part of the current NIA governing board.

Thus, this bill seeks to correct the current composition of the NIA governing board by mandating the Secretary of Agriculture to sit as its *ex-officio* Chairperson to ensure the coordination and harmonization of NIA’s programs and policies to the agriculture industry’s overall strategic development.

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



**RALPH G. RECTO**

/mabm

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<sup>2</sup> Manila Times (July 6, 2016). *Good—NIA, NFA and PCA again under Agriculture Department*. Information retrieved from <http://www.manilatimes.net/good-nia-nfa-and-pca-again-under-agriculture-department/272148/> on April 5, 2018.

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ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED

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

1           **SECTION 1.** Section 4 of Republic Act No. 3601, as amended is hereby further  
2 amended to read as follows:

3           "Sec. 4. Board of Directors. The powers and functions of the National Irrigation  
4 Administration shall be exercised by a Board of Directors composed of six  
5 members, to wit: The Secretary of [Public Works, Transportation and  
6 Communications] **AGRICULTURE**, who shall be the [Chairman]  
7 **CHAIRPERSON**, the Administrator of the National Irrigation Administration,  
8 who shall be the Vice-[Chairman] **CHAIRPERSON**, the Director General of the  
9 National Economic and Development Authority, the Secretary of [Agriculture]  
10 **PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS**, the General Manager of the National  
11 Power Corporation, and one member who shall be appointed by the President of  
12 the Philippines on recommendation of any national rice and corn organization of  
13 good standing and who shall serve for a term of four years unless sooner  
14 removed.

15           x x x."

16           **SEC. 2. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations which are  
17 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

18           **SEC. 3. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication  
19 in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

*Approved,*