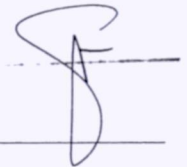


**SENATE**

'19 JUL 29 P 3:54

S. No. 807

RECEIVED



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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**AN ACT**  
**INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE FIBER INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT**  
**PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to spur the revival and the development, production, processing, marketing and distribution of Philippine local fibers in suitable areas of the country in order to provide income to people living in rural areas and spur economic growth.

Philippine weaving involves many threads being measured, cut, and mounted on a wooden platform. The threads are dyed and weaved on a loom. Before Spanish colonization, native Filipinos weaved using fibers from abaca, cotton, and bark cloth. They also weave all of the clothing that was worn then. The woven textiles express both the agricultural roots of each community, as well as a strong non-Christian belief system animated by ancestral and natural spirits, such as the wind god, a motif prevalent in weaving communities. Filipino artistry and creativity are evident in various art forms but what makes the weaving culture distinct.

The textile industry began in the country in the 1950s. It covers: fiber production, and yarn, fabric, garment, and made-up textile manufacture. The primary processing sector includes spinning, twisting, weaving, knitting, dyeing and

finishing. Spinning involves the mixture of natural and man-made fibers into yarns and threads. The weaving process turns yarns and threads into woven fabrics, while the knitting process, produces knitted fabrics. The finishing stage improves the appearance, texture and quality of fabrics through bleaching, dyeing, printing, and treatment. The secondary-processing sector includes garment and made-up textile goods manufacturing.

The weaving of indigenous textiles with cotton fiber is an integral part of the country's culture but it has been in trouble for some time. The traditional weavers have turned to the use of synthetic thread due to cotton scarcity over the past few decades. In the past, the thread was made from various materials such as cotton, jusi (banana fiber), piña (pineapple fiber), ramie or Chinese nettle found in Mindanao is even stronger than cotton and wool and Maguey can be used as upholstery and wall covering, table linens and curtains. Nowadays, it's just mostly made from cotton and rayon thread because, unfortunately, prices of raw materials have skyrocketed over the years.

We Filipinos can take pride in the amazing diversity and beauty of our textile arts and weaving traditions. The Mandaya people of Davao Oriental are known for their masterful ikat (a weaving pattern) in abaca, the primary fiber they use for weaving.

The Piña cloth originated from Aklan. Considered the finest of Philippine textiles, the piña fabric is made from the fibers of the leaves of the red Bisaya pineapple through an arduous process. The piña is the preferred material for the barong Tagalog. Hablon is a type of woven cloth most often seen during formal events, fashion shows, and in homes of Ilongos. It is taken from the Hiligaynon word "habol", meaning "to weave".

The Ilocano of northwestern Philippines is well-known for their inabel hand weaving, a tradition with ancient roots, with the kapas or cotton as the main material. The abel cloth is known for being a strong, colorful material for blankets, pillow cases and



Cotton production in the country has declined since the early 1990s “when the country had 38,000 hectares planted in the crop,” states an article by the Cornell Alliance for Science, citing the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA). In November 2017, the agency spearheaded the planting of the Bt cotton variety, a genetically engineered crop that resists bollworm, in the provinces of Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, and areas in Mindanao in an effort to revive the local cotton industry. Its adoption promises lower production costs and consistent supply.

The local silk industry needs capital and government support in terms of promotion to take advantage of the huge global market. Sericulture or silkworm culture, the rearing of silkworm for the production of raw silk, is an emerging industry in the Philippines. Bago City in Negros Occidental produces some of the best quality silks in the world. Hundreds of farmers from Bago and other neighboring towns are supported by this industry. Farmers rear silkworm whose cocoons are produced into silk yarns which are then used as raw material for Barong Tagalog and other world-class silk products. There is also a silkworm farm that produces silk fabric in Bacnotan, La Union and a processing plant at the Sericulture Research and Development Institute (SRDI) at the Don Mariano Marcos State University also in La Union. Mulberry trees absorb air pollutants while silkworm wastes and residues during the production period can be converted into organic fertilizer.

Ramie fiber is pure white in color, lustrous, moisture absorbent, and readily dyed. The fibers are spun into yarn, which can then be woven into textiles. The fiber is stronger than flax, cotton, or wool. Ramie is a perennial plant that may live for several years and can be found in Mindanao.

Maguey, (*Agave cantala* Roxb.), grows into a rosette of 20-50 leaves and grows in soil which seems unproductive like rocky and hilly areas and even along the seashore. It is not difficult to grow and does not require abundant and evenly distributed rainfall. Maguey plant has strong resistance to pest draught and diseases. The maguey fabric is can be used as upholstery and manufacturing wall covering, bags, table linens and curtains.

The Cordillera Region has their own style and fabric execution in their ikat weaving. They use indigenous raw materials from banana, cogon, abaca and maguey and braid them with polyester or cotton textile. The yarn is colored with natural dye from ginger or indigo plants, mud, and tree bark.

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Mindanao weaving communities include the Mandaya, B'laan, Maranao, Maguindanao, Yakan, Bagobo, T'boli, and Tausug, each with weaving traditions and techniques distinct from the next.

The Mandaya, which can be found in the provinces of Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Compostella Valley, Surigao del Sur, and Agusan del Sur, have a strong weaving tradition too as seen in their coarsely textured dagmay, hand-woven using a special kind of back-strap loom, made from abaca fibers, and following intricate designs.

The B'laan weave the tabih using abaca fibers and the back-strap loom. The fibers are dyed using the warp tie-dye resist ikat technique and natural dyes from native plants.

The Maranaw of Lanao del Norte and Lanao Del Sur know a wide range of weaving techniques including the weft and warp ikat tie-dye resist and continuous and discontinuous supplementary weft design.



The T'Boli of Lake Sebu in Cotabato are well-known for their t'nalak, a distinctive abaca cloth that traditionally comes in three colors: deep reddish brown, black, and white. The brown and black colors come from naturally occurring dyes, with white being the natural color of abaca.

The Bagobo, a subgroup of the Manobo, are expert in extracting the fibers of the abaca from the leaf sheaths and selecting the very fine ones for weaving their textiles. The Tausug of Jolo in Sulu is an Islamic community structured around a sultanate. They used to weave cotton and silk textiles from imported yarns.

Sadly, modern times are threatening to wipe out the things that have made us uniquely Filipino. Fiber production in the country which is principally cotton has declined since the early 1990s. The weavers lack the materials to use for their designs or they are expensive. The industry's downfall may have been largely due to uncontrollable forces in the textile industry worldwide — think of the cheap, fast fashion sourced in mass-produced fabrics from abroad. We cannot just watch our cultural traditions fade. Other production related problems include lack of planting materials, (low yield and lack of hectarage) lack of working capital to sustain knotting and weaving activities, unstable supply and high price of raw materials and lack of market information .

While progress is good, it should never stand in the way of us preserving those things that are rightfully part of our heritage and way of life. There are also challenges such as the market, the innovation of design, technique and the use of physical labor, the output per looms and their efficiency, the contemporary usage of the woven products and the inventory of all weavers, product promotion, and the loss of interest in weaving among the younger members of the community. Proper financial assistance is not available to have the stock of raw materials like cotton, abaca, jusi, ramie, piña, silk, maguey for the weavers to work continuously. Further the raw materials are provided by the private dealers with high costs and there are no credit lines available to weavers for them to purchase materials when needed.

The state of our fiber industry needs a lot of catching up for our country to meet local demands and be promoted internationally. This will entail convincing the farmers to plant, giving them a market, and helping them make profit.

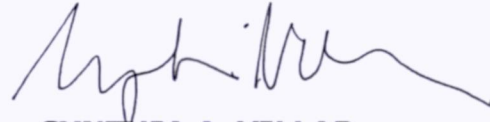
The Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) is an agency of the Department of Agriculture responsible for promoting the growth and development of the fiber industry in the Philippines, such as abaca, cotton, silk, coir among others. PhilFIDA was created by Executive Order No. 709 on July 27, 1981 to promote growth and development of the fiber industry, in all its aspects including research, production, processing, marketing and trade regulation. It ceased to be a government owned and controlled corporation and was regularized under Executive Order No. 494, series of 1981. It is led by an administrator, who is assisted by two deputy administrators and supported by nine divisions and ten regional offices.

The Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) is the premier textile research and development arm of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). It is mandated by Executive Order No. 128 dated January 30, 1987 to perform the following functions, - Conduct applied research and development for the textile industry sector; undertake the transfer of completed researches to end-users or via linkage units of other government agencies; and undertake technical services and provide training programs. Most of the technologies can be commercialized through on-the-job training and/or seminar/workshops offered by the Institute. Seminar/workshops are done in-house or throughout the regions and provinces.

The state of our fiber industry needs a lot of catching up for the country to meet local demand. This will entail convincing the farmers to plant, giving them a market, and helping them make a profit. The promotion of production and planting materials and methods of fiber crops is with PhilFida, while the execution and processing of this plants to threads and ultimately cloth in with DOST-PTRI. The two agencies in charge should together and in complementation spearhead the revival and promotion of Philippine fiber and in the end the Philippine textile industry.

Through the transfer of the developed technologies to end-users in the textile industry sector and textile-based cottage, small and medium scale industries, it is hoped that new textile-based industries in the countryside would be developed.

In view of the foregoing, I highly recommend the approval of this bill.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia Villar', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

**CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

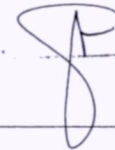
**Senator**



**SENATE**

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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**AN ACT**

**INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE FIBER INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 "Philippine Fiber  
2 Industry Development Program of 2019."

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to  
4 protect and promote the right of the Filipino people to a better quality of life,  
5 improve their living conditions, through programs that provide sustainable livelihood,  
6 increase employment and protect the environment.

7 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms  
8 shall refer to:

9 a) *Program* – the Philippine Abaca Industry Development Program  
10 designed to promote competitiveness of the Abaca Industry worldwide.

11 b) *Philippine Fiber Industry Development Council (PFIDC)* – the council  
12 established herewith.



1           c)     Secretariat – the Secretariat of the PFIDC as contained herewith shall  
2 be DOST-PTRI.

3           *Sec. 4. Creation of the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Coordinating*  
4 *Council (PFIDCC).* – There is hereby created a Philippine Fiber Industry Development  
5 Coordinating Council (PFIDCC), hereinafter referred to as the Council,  
6 administratively attached to the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine  
7 Textile Research Institute, charged with the main function of coordinating the  
8 activities of various agencies and instrumentalities to ensure the accomplishment of  
9 the Philippine Fiber Framework for Development.

10          The Chairman of the Council shall submit an annual report to both Houses of  
11 Congress on the status of the implementation of this Act.

12          *Sec. 5. Composition.* – The Philippine Fiber Industry Development  
13 Coordinating Council shall be composed of the following:

- 14          a)     Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology as Chairman  
15                 (DOST);
- 16          b)     The Executive Director of Philippine Textile Research Institute as Head of  
17                 the Council Secretariat;
- 18          c)     Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural resources  
19                 (DENR);
- 20          d)     Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);
- 21          e)     Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA);
- 22          f)     Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
- 23          g)     Representative from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines;
- 24          h)     Representative from a League of Provinces;
- 25          i)     Representative from the State Universities and Colleges with Fiber  
26                 Development Extension Program;
- 27          j)     Representative from a reputable Private Fiber Industry Association;
- 28          k)     Two (2) Representatives from Fiber Farmers / Producers / Processors /  
29                 Associations;

1           l)    One (1) Representative from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).  
2           The council regularly meet every two (2) months and may hold special  
3 meetings, whenever the need arises, to consider urgent matters upon the call of the  
4 Chairman or any seven (7) Council members.

5           *Sec. 6. Institutionalizing the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Program*  
6 *(PFIDP).* – There is hereby established the Philippine Fiber Industry Development  
7 Program, within the mandate of the DOST-PTRI, which shall be a ten (10) year  
8 framework and shall serve as guide to the formulation and implementation of plans,  
9 projects, programs and policies for the scientific propagation, processing, utilization  
10 and expansion of trade of Philippine major Fibers. The Framework shall likewise  
11 provide for the following:

12           a) *Site Identification* – The Department of Environment and Natural  
13 Resources in coordination with the Department of Agriculture, Department of  
14 Agrarian Reform and the local government units, shall identify the broad areas  
15 suitable for the planning and propagation of Philippine fibers, within six (6) months  
16 after the effectivity of this Act.

17           b) *Scientific Propagation and Development* – The Department of Environment  
18 and Natural Resources and the Department of Science and Technology shall  
19 establish cultivation and propagation of Philippine disease free and disease resistant  
20 varieties of Philippine major fibers. The DOST shall also provide for the transfer and  
21 improvement of appropriate technology and techniques, which will be utilized in the  
22 production, processing, marketing and distribution. Particular emphasis shall also be  
23 made on adoption and upgrading of post-harvest technology;

24           c) *Production Support and Extension* – The Department of Environment and  
25 Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Department of Trade and Industry,  
26 and the Department of Science and Technology in coordination with the local  
27 Government Units, and Non-Governmental Organizations, technical Education and  
28 Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA),  
29 state universities and colleges (SUCs), and other relevant government agencies,  
30 shall establish programs which promote and provide adequate training on adapting



1 technologies to individuals engaged in propagation, production, processing,  
2 marketing and distribution of Philippine abaca, strengthen farmers / producers /  
3 processors cooperatives and organizations involved in the sustainable and viable  
4 development of Philippine abaca.

5         d) *Market Promotion and Expansion of Trade* – The Department of Trade and  
6 Industry, in coordination with Private Industry Associations, shall link-up  
7 agribusiness cooperatives and organizations directly with consumers cooperatives  
8 and organizations, agro-processing companies, or exporters to provide marketing  
9 outlets and assure relatively higher and stable prices of abaca. This also includes  
10 exploring national and international markets and facilitating the participation of local  
11 farmers, growers and exporters in local and international conferences, trade fairs,  
12 expositions and exhibit;

13         e) *Infrastructure Development* – Access to post harvest facilities, storage and  
14 distribution/transport facilities of existing government agencies shall be facilitated by  
15 the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Local Government Units and  
16 the Department of Agriculture.

17         f) *Quality Assurance* – To ensure health and proper trading, the Department  
18 of trade and Industry, and Department of Science and technology, respectively, shall  
19 establish and enforce standards in grading, sampling and inspection, tests and  
20 analysis, specifications, nomenclature, units of measurement, packaging,  
21 preservation, conservation or transportation of Philippine fiber products and by-  
22 products and;

23         g) *Philippine Fiber Information Center* – The Department of Trade and  
24 Industry in coordination with Local Government Units shall establish a Philippine  
25 Abaca Information Center in areas where they are abundant.

26         *Sec. 7. Philippine Fiber Information Center.* – To provide for the funding  
27 requirements for the propagation, production, processing, marketing, promotion and  
28 distribution of Philippine fibers, there is hereby created a Philippine fiber  
29 Development Fund (PFDF), with an initial amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos



1 (Php500,000,000.00) upon the approval of this Act and every year thereafter, to be  
2 provided by the Department of Budget and Management in the DOST-PTRI's budget.  
3 This is in addition to PTRI's existing allocation under the General Appropriations Act  
4 for the development of other fibers and its administrative, regulatory and operational  
5 expenses.

6 For the succeeding years, for the next nine (9) years from the approval of this  
7 Act, a minimum amount of not less than Five Hundred Million Pesos  
8 (Php500,000,000.00) annually shall be allocated for the development and  
9 sustainability of the Philippine Fiber industry. The requirements of cooperating  
10 agencies shall be incorporated in their respective budget from the General  
11 Appropriations fund.

12 *Sec. 8. The Council Secretariat.* – The Council Secretariat shall be headed by  
13 the Director of the PTRI. The Secretariat and technical staff shall be detailed from  
14 their existing personnel without prejudice to the designation by the Council of such  
15 additional staff members as it may deem necessary for the proper discharge of its  
16 function and responsibilities.

17 *Sec. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Philippine Fiber Industry  
18 Development Coordinating Council shall formulate and prescribe the necessary  
19 implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

20 *Sec. 10. Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is  
21 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provisions  
22 hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and effect.

23 *Sec. 11. Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
24 executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent or contrary to  
25 the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1            Sec. 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days  
2 following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general  
3 circulation.

4            Approved,