



**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
*First Regular Session*

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**SENATE**

**Senate Bill No. 1232**

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**Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri**

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**AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Constitution provides for the autonomy of the Cordillera region, as provided in Section 15 of Article X which states:

*There shall be created autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordilleras consisting of provinces, cities, municipalities, and geographic areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of this Constitution and the national sovereignty as well as territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines.*

Thirty-two years since the promulgation of the Constitution, the region of Cordillera has yet to achieve real autonomy. The establishment of an autonomous region of Cordillera is important to provide a basic structure of government in the region and to secure the identity and cultural heritage of the people of Cordillera.

The Cordillera Administrative Region is home to a number of indigenous tribes collectively known as the *Igorot*. There are 12 ethnolinguistic groups in the Cordillera Administrative Region, namely the Applai, Balangao (sometimes known as Baliwon), Bontok, Kankanaey, Iwak, Karao, Ibaloy, Kalanguya, Ifugao, Isnag, Kalinga and Tingguian.<sup>1</sup> According to data from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, there are 1,252,962 indigenous peoples residing in the region.<sup>2</sup> This is a huge percentage of the total recorded population of the region in 2015 which was recorded at 1,722,006.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ncipcar.ph/index.php/about-ips>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncipro67.com.ph/indigenous-peoples-of-the-philippines/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://psa.gov.ph/content/population-cordillera-administrative-region-based-2015-census-population>


Through the establishment of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera, the people from the Cordilleras will have the opportunity to decide on what policies and programs will best fit the region and at the same time have the freedom to pursue their political, economic, social and cultural development within the framework of national sovereignty and in consonance with their local practices and cultural heritage and identity. With genuine regional autonomy, it is our belief that underdevelopment and poverty in the Cordilleras can be more effectively addressed.

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

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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**SENATE**

**Senate Bill No. 1232**

**Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri**

**AN ACT**

**ESTABLISHING THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**

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

**PREAMBLE**

We, the Cordillerans, imploring the will of Divine Providence, exercising our fundamental and Constitutional right to self-determination, faithful to the pursuit of our forebears for the protection, conservation and development of our patrimony and cultural heritage, in order to secure for ourselves and our posterity a region of peace and prosperity founded on truth, fairness, freedom, justice, love and solidarity through an Autonomous Region that shall ensure our human development, and our active participation as citizens in the affairs of a united Philippine State, do proclaim this Organic Act of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME AND PURPOSE**

SECTION 1. **Name.** – There is hereby established an autonomous region in the Cordillera to be known as the "*Autonomous Region of the Cordillera*."

SEC. 2. **Purpose.** – The purpose of this law is to establish an effective political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition of the justness and cause of the Cordillerans and to secure their identity, posterity, and allow for meaningful governance.



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## ARTICLE II

### AREA OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA

SEC. 3. ***Area of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.*** – The area of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC) shall consist of the city and provinces that shall vote favorably in the plebiscite called for the ratification of this Organic Act pursuant to Section 18, Article X of the 1987 Constitution. The area of the plebiscite shall be the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and the chartered City of Baguio.

SEC. 4. ***Cordilleran Identity.*** – The term “*Cordilleran*” shall apply to all citizens of the Philippines who are residents for at least one (1) year within the ARC.

## ARTICLE III

### DECLARATION OF POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES

SEC. 5. ***Integral Part of the Republic.*** – The ARC shall remain an integral and inseparable part of the national territory of the Philippines as defined by the Constitution and existing laws. The autonomous region shall be governed and administered in accordance with the laws enacted by the Regional Assembly and by this Organic Act.

SEC. 6. ***Equitable Share in the National Budget and Development Assistance.*** – The national government shall provide the autonomous region a proportionate and equitable share in the annual national budget and foreign assisted projects in addition to other financial assistance, support and subsidies to accelerate its development. Whenever the Commission on Audit finds that the internal controls set up in the region are inadequate, it may require pre-audit and shall likewise conduct seminars in the communities concerned explaining the benefits and proper use of the internal revenue allotments.

SEC. 7. ***Self-governance.*** – In the exercise of their right to genuine autonomy and meaningful self-governance, Cordillerans are free to pursue their political, economic, social and cultural development within the framework of national sovereignty and in accordance with the Constitution.



1           SEC. 8. **Democratic Political System.** – The Regional Government is a  
2 democratic political system allowing the people to participate in the political processes.

3           SEC. 9. **Prior and Preferential Right.** – Cordillerans shall have prior and  
4 preferential right to the natural, material, and fiscal resources of the ARC.

5           SEC. 10. **Fundamental Rights and Duties of People.** – The fundamental  
6 rights and duties of the people in the ARC are those defined in the Constitution, this  
7 Organic Act and the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act.

8           SEC. 11. **Rights to Initiatives, Consultations, Referenda and Plebiscites.**  
9 – Without prejudice to other rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the rights of the  
10 people of the ARC to initiate measures for the passage, amendment or repeal of  
11 regional or local legislation; to be consulted on matters that affect their welfare; to call  
12 for a referendum on important issues affecting their lives; and, to recall regional or local  
13 officials as provided by Republic Act (RA) No. 7160, also known as the "*Local*  
14 *Government Code of 1991*," are hereby recognized.

15           SEC. 12. **Accountability of Public Officers.** – The Regional Government, to  
16 meet the priority needs and service requirements of its constituents shall adopt the  
17 principles of integrity, transparency and accountability in order to ensure an  
18 accountable, efficient and dynamic organizational structure.

20           SEC. 13. **Upholding Human Rights.** – The Regional Government shall take  
21 measures to prevent torture, cruel, inhumane and degrading punishment, illegal  
22 detention and extra-judicial killings.

23           SEC. 14. **Establishment of Peace Zones.** – The Regional Government adheres  
24 to the policy of peace and shall establish peace zones within the region.

25           SEC. 15. **Devolution of Powers.** – The Regional Government shall adopt a  
26 policy on local autonomy whereby regional powers shall be devolved to local  
27 government units (LGUs) particularly in areas of education, health, human resources,  
28 science and technology, and people empowerment. Until a law implementing this  
29 provision is enacted by the Regional Assembly, the provisions of RA 7160 shall continue  
30 to apply to all provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangay within ARC.

31           The regional assembly shall not pass any law to diminish, lessen or reduce the  
32 powers, functions, and shares in the internal revenue allotment of the said local  
33 government units as provided by RA 7160.

1           SEC. 16. ***Sustainable Use and Management of Resources.*** – The Regional  
2 Government shall share with the national government in the exploration, development  
3 and utilization of its natural resources, conservation and protection of natural resources  
4 by promoting the sustainable use and management thereof and adopts environmentally  
5 sound and appropriate technology in the management of natural resources. The use of  
6 renewable energy shall be promoted for power generation.

7           SEC. 17. ***Community Responsive Education.*** – The Regional Government  
8 shall integrate in the educational system a subject that responds to the needs of the  
9 Cordillera communities which respects and promotes Cordilleran knowledge, core  
10 values, systems, institutions, culture and practice; encourages the use of languages and  
11 methods of education; promotes science and appropriate technology and  
12 methodologies that encourage creative and critical thinking of the Cordilleran.

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14           SEC. 18. ***Protection and Empowerment.*** – The Regional Government shall  
15 formulate plans and programs for the empowerment of the youth and guarantees their  
16 effective participation and representation in all aspects of public affairs. Laws shall be  
17 enacted, and measures adopted to protect women and children against all forms of  
18 neglect, cruelty, and exploitation which are harmful to their moral, physical, or mental  
19 health.

20           SEC. 19. ***Regional Arrangements.*** – The Regional Government shall pursue a  
21 policy of interregional development planning, coordination and mutual cooperation in  
22 order to sustain the use, development as well as the protection and conservation of its  
23 resources which benefits other regions.

24           SEC. 20. ***Equal Access and Non-discrimination.*** – The Regional Government  
25 shall ensure equal access by Cordillerans to resources, employment opportunities and  
26 services regardless of ethnic origin, gender, language, political conviction, economic,  
27 social status or religious belief.

28           SEC. 21. ***Social Justice.*** – The Regional Government shall minimize disparities  
29 between the rich and the poor, rural and urban areas within the region by providing,  
30 maintaining and ensuring the equitable delivery of basic and responsive health  
31 programs, quality education, appropriate services, livelihood opportunities, affordable  
32 and progressive housing projects and water resource development.

33           SEC. 22. ***Foreign Investments.*** – The Regional Government shall provide  
34 incentives to investors, corporations and other businesses, but shall adopt measures to



1 prevent the abuse of human rights and exploitation of natural resources. To this end,  
2 the Regional Government shall adopt local and international safeguards to review and  
3 audit the impact of all forms of foreign aid, loans special projects and the like.

4 SEC. 23. **Customary Laws.** – Existing customary justice and laws on personal,  
5 family and property relations shall be respected.

6  
7 **ARTICLE IV**

8 **THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF THE CORDILLERA**

9 **A. Powers of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera**

10 SEC. 24. **Powers and Functions.** – The Regional Government shall exercise  
11 powers and functions necessary for the proper governance and development of all  
12 provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays within the autonomous region consistent  
13 with the declared constitutional policy on local autonomy and decentralization:  
14 *Provided:* That nothing in this Act shall be construed as to authorize the diminution of  
15 the powers and functions already enjoyed by local government units.

16 SEC. 25. **Devolved Powers.** – The Autonomous Region of the Cordillera is a  
17 corporate entity with jurisdiction in all matters devolved to it by the Constitution and  
18 this Organic Act as herein enumerated:

19 (1) Administrative organization:

- 20 a. Declaration of holidays;  
21 b. Public administration and bureaucracy for the region; and  
22 c. Identification, generation, and mobilization of international human resources  
23 for capacity-building and other activities involving the same within the region.

24 (2) Creation of sources of revenues:

- 25 a. Authority to regulate power generation, transmission and distribution  
26 operating exclusively in the autonomous region; and  
27 b. Imposition of taxes except those which are already taxed by the national and  
28 local government.

29 (3) Ancestral domain and natural resources:

- 30 a. Protection of the ancestral domain and ancestral lands of indigenous cultural  
31 communities (ICCs) consistent with IPRA.  
32 b. Declaration of nature reserves and aquatic parks, forests, watershed  
33 reservations, and other protected areas in the autonomous region.



- 1 c. Authority, power, and right to the control and supervision over the  
2 exploration, utilization, development, and protection of the lands, forests,  
3 water, minerals and other natural resources within the autonomous region in  
4 accordance with the Constitution and the pertinent provisions of this Organic  
5 Act including strategic minerals such as uranium, petroleum, and other fossil  
6 fuels, mineral oil, and all sources of potential energy.
- 7 d. Regulation of small-scale mining to the end that the ecological balance, safety  
8 and health, and the interests of the affected communities, and the local  
9 government units of the place where such operations are conducted are duly  
10 protected and safeguarded.
- 11 (4) Urban and rural planning development:
- 12 a. Adoption and implementation of a comprehensive land use program;  
13 b. Land management, land distribution, and agricultural land use  
14 reclassification; and  
15 c. Authority to conduct cadastral survey in coordination with the Department of  
16 Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).
- 17 (5) Economic, social and tourism development:
- 18 a. Establishment of transportation and communication facilities;  
19 b. Promotion of tourism within the autonomous region; and  
20 c. Regulation of games and amusement operations within ARC.
- 21 (6) Educational policies in skills training, research and scholarships.
- 22 (7) Preservation and development of the cultural heritage, establishment of its own  
23 libraries and museums, and declaration of historical and cultural sites, in  
24 coordination with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCAA); and  
25 (8) Such other matters for the promotion of the general welfare of its inhabitants.
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## 27 **B. Intergovernmental Relations**

28 SEC. 26. **General Supervision.** – Consistent with the principle of autonomy,  
29 the President shall exercise general supervision over the Regional Government to  
30 ensure that laws are faithfully executed.

31 SEC. 27. **Regional Line Agencies.** – Regional Line Agencies shall continue to  
32 exist without diminution of their mandated authority. Regional line agency officials and  
33 employees shall continue to be paid by the national government. There shall be no  
34 diminution of their compensation and other benefits due its officials and employees.  
35 Existing assets and properties of the regional line agencies and offices shall remain  
36 under their custody and accountability.

1           SEC. 28. **Tenure of Civil Service Employees.** – Except for just cause and after  
2 due process, officials and employees of the regional line agencies and offices in the  
3 region shall not be laid off, dismissed or removed as a result of any reorganization  
4 attendant to the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

5           SEC. 29. **Priority in Hiring.** – Officials and employees of the regional  
6 autonomous government and the regional line agencies in the autonomous region shall  
7 be hired in accordance with appropriate civil service rules and regulations, but priority  
8 shall be accorded to qualified Cordillerans.

9           SEC. 30. **Appointment to Third Level Positions.** – The Regional Governor  
10 shall fill up third level positions from among at least three (3) recommendees of the  
11 Regional Personnel Selection Board (PSB) that shall be duly constituted.

12           SEC. 31. **Budget Preparation.** – Regional line agencies and offices shall  
13 prepare their respective budgets separate and distinct from the budget of the Regional  
14 Government. Their budgets shall however be furnished to the regional government to  
15 ensure that plans and priorities of the autonomous region are harmonized and properly  
16 considered in the budgeting processes.

17           SEC. 32. **Management of ODA Funds.** – The autonomous region may avail of  
18 Official Development Assistance (ODA)-funded projects and other foreign financial  
19 grants or donations and shall undertake these projects through the regional line  
20 agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), state colleges and  
21 universities, local government units or whichever is deemed appropriate.

22           SEC. 33. **Government Owned and Controlled Corporations.** – Government  
23 Owned and Controlled Corporations such as the Government Service Insurance System,  
24 the Social Security System, the Pagtutulungan-Ikaw, Bangko Industriya't Gobyerno  
25 (PAG-IBIG), PhilHealth and others shall continue to be governed by their respective  
26 charters and other pertinent laws.

27           SEC. 34. **Autonomy of Local Government Units.** – Local government units  
28 shall continue to be independent from each other and shall have the same set of local  
29 officials and employees and shall enjoy autonomy and continue to exercise the powers  
30 granted them under the Local Government Code and other existing laws. The Local  
31 Government Code shall apply to all provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays in the  
32 autonomous region until the Regional Assembly shall enact a regional Local  
33 Government Code. Nothing herein provided shall be construed in any manner as to



diminish the powers and functions as well as benefits and privileges already being enjoyed by the local government units.

SEC. 35. ***Supervision of Local Government Units through the Regional Governor.*** – Consistent with the basic policy on local autonomy, the President, through the Regional Governor shall exercise supervision over LGUs in the autonomous region to ensure that their acts are within the scope of their prescribed powers and functions.

SEC. 36. **Revenues and Taxes Accruing to LGUs.** – Revenues, taxes, fees and charges generated by the local government units and the regional government from their respective local tax ordinances shall exclusively accrue to them.

SEC. 37. ***Just Share in National Taxes.*** – The local government units in the autonomous region, including the Regional Government, shall have a just share in the national taxes and applicable revenues which shall be automatically released to them.

SEC. 38. ***Equitable Share in the Utilization of Resources.*** – The local government units in the autonomous region including the Regional Government shall be entitled to an equitable share in the proceeds of the utilization and development of the national wealth within their respective areas, in the manner provided by law and this Organic Act.

SEC. 39. **City Charters.** – Chartered cities within the autonomous region shall be governed primarily by their charters.

SEC. 40. ***Creation of Special Political Subdivisions.*** – Special metropolitan political subdivisions may, by law, be created by the Regional Assembly, subject to a plebiscite. The component cities and municipalities shall retain their basic autonomy and shall be entitled to their own local executive and legislative bodies. The jurisdiction of the metropolitan authority that will thereby be created shall be limited to basic services requiring coordination.

SEC. 41. ***Right of LGU's to Aggregate.*** – Local government units in the autonomous region may group themselves, consolidate or coordinate their efforts, services, and resources for purposes commonly beneficial to them in accordance with law.

## ARTICLE V

**ELECTIVE OFFICIALS OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGIONAL GOVERNMENT –  
THEIR QUALIFICATIONS, TERMS OF OFFICE, VACANCIES AND SUCCESSION,  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY**



1  
2 SEC. 42. **Elective Officials.** – The elective officials of the Autonomous Region of  
3 the Cordillera are the (a) Regional Governor, (b) Regional Vice-Governor, and (c)  
4 Members of the Regional Assembly.

5 SEC. 43. **Qualifications.** – (a) Candidates for Regional Governor and Vice-  
6 Governor positions must be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, at least  
7 twenty-five (25) years of age on election day, a registered voter in the region and a  
8 resident thereof for a period of at least one (1) year immediately preceding the day of  
9 election, able to read and write Filipino or English; (b) Candidates for the position of  
10 Member of the Regional Assembly must be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran,  
11 at least twenty five (25) years of age on election day, a registered voter in the  
12 provincial district or city and a resident thereof for a period of at least one (1) year  
13 immediately preceding the day of election, able to read and write Filipino or English or  
14 any other local language in the region.

15 SEC. 44. **Disqualifications.** – In addition to the disqualifications provided under  
16 Book I, Title Two, Chapter 1, Section 40 of the Local Government Code, candidates for  
17 Regional Governor, Vice-Governor and members of the Regional Assembly must not be  
18 related to the incumbent elected regional officials within the fourth degree of  
19 consanguinity or affinity.

20 SEC. 45. **Manner of Election.** – The Regional Governor and Vice-Governor,  
21 who shall belong to the same political party, shall be elected at large by direct vote of  
22 the registered voters of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. A vote to the  
23 Regional Governor shall be counted as a vote to the Regional Vice-Governor.

24 (a) Each province and city shall elect their own representatives to the Regional  
25 Assembly. Any highly urbanized city in the autonomous region is entitled to four (4)  
26 representatives to the Regional Assembly. Each province shall be entitled to four (4)  
27 representatives, two (2) per provincial district, and one (1) for the component city.  
28 *Provided:* That any component city created after the effectivity of this Organic Act shall  
29 be entitled to representation to the Regional Assembly as may be provided by law.

30 (b) Unless otherwise provided, the regular election of the Regional Governor,  
31 Vice Governor, and members of the Regional Assembly shall be held on the second  
32 Monday of May.

1        SEC. 46. **Term of Office.** – (a) The term of office of all elective regional officials  
2        elected after the effectivity of this Organic Act shall be three (3) years which shall begin  
3        at noon on the thirtieth day of June next following the day of election and shall end at  
4        noon of the same date three (3) years thereafter. No regional governor, vice-governor,  
5        or member of the regional assembly shall serve for more than three (3) consecutive  
6        terms.

7        (b) Voluntary renunciation of, or removal from, office for any length of time shall not be  
8        considered as an interruption in the continuity of the service for the full term for which  
9        officials were elected.

10       SEC. 47. **Oath of Office.** – The Regional Governor, Vice-Governor and Members  
11       of the Regional Assembly on assuming office shall take the following oath or  
12       affirmation:

13       *"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully and conscientiously fulfill my*  
14       *duties as Governor/Vice-Governor/Member of the Regional Assembly of the*  
15       *Autonomous Region of the Cordillera, preserve and defend the Constitution of*  
16       *the Republic of the Philippines and the Organic Act of the Autonomous Region of*  
17       *the Cordillera, execute these laws, do justice to all and consecrate myself to the*  
18       *service of the nation and the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. So help me*  
19       *God."* (In case of affirmation, the last sentence will be omitted.)

20       SEC. 48. **Prohibitions.** – (a) The Regional Governor and Vice-Governor shall  
21       not, during their tenure, engage in the practice of any profession or hold any other  
22       office or employment, except as otherwise provided in this Act.

23       (b) The spouse and other relatives by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth  
24       civil degree of the Regional Governor and the Regional Vice-Governor shall not, during  
25       their tenure, be appointed officers or employees of the Regional Government, except as  
26       members of their confidential staff.

27       (c) No member of the Regional Assembly may hold any other office or  
28       employment in the government or any subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof,  
29       including government-owned or controlled corporations, or their subsidiaries, during  
30       their term without forfeiting their seat. Neither shall any member of the regional  
31       assembly be appointed to any office which has been created or the emoluments  
32       whereof increased by the Regional Assembly during the term for which such member  
33       was elected.



1 (d) The Regional Governor, and Regional Vice-Governor, and members of the  
2 Regional Assembly shall not personally appear as counsel before any court of justice or  
3 before the Electoral Commission or quasi-judicial and other administrative bodies.

4 (e) The Regional Governor, Regional Vice-Governor, and members of the  
5 Regional Assembly shall not participate directly or indirectly in any contract with or in  
6 any franchise or special privilege granted by the Regional Government or any  
7 subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof, including any government-owned or-  
8 controlled corporations or in any of their subsidiaries. They shall not intervene in any  
9 matter before any office of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera for their pecuniary  
10 benefit or where they may be called upon to act on account of their office.

11 SEC. 49. ***Vacancies and Succession.*** – (a) In the event that the position of the  
12 Regional Governor becomes permanently vacant, the Regional Vice-Governor shall  
13 automatically become the Regional Governor.

14 (b) If the position of the Regional Vice-Governor becomes permanently vacant,  
15 the member of the assembly belonging to the same political party, garnering the  
16 highest percentage of votes in the district represented shall become the vice-governor  
17 or in case of permanent disability, the second highest shall assume said position.

18 (c) In case of a permanent vacancy in the assembly where automatic succession  
19 does not apply, the Regional Governor shall appoint to the position so vacated the  
20 nominee of the political party to which the member who caused the vacancy belonged  
21 at the time of such members' election. If the one causing the vacancy does not belong  
22 to any political party, the Regional Governor shall appoint the nominee of the majority  
23 of the members of the assembly. *Provided:* That the appointee has all the qualifications  
24 and none of the disqualifications as provided by this Organic Act. *Provided further:* That  
25 in both cases the appointee comes from the same district.

26 (d) For purposes of this article, a permanent vacancy arises when the incumbent  
27 elective official concerned dies, voluntarily resigns, is removed from office, fills up a  
28 higher vacant office, refuses to assume office, fails to qualify, or is otherwise  
29 permanently incapacitated to exercise the powers and discharge the functions of the  
30 office.

31 SEC. 50. ***Temporary Vacancies.*** – (a) When the Regional Governor is  
32 temporarily incapacitated to perform his duties for physical or legal reasons such as  
33 leave of absence, travel abroad, and suspension from office, the regional vice governor  
34 shall automatically exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions of the



1 former except the power to appoint, suspend or dismiss employees which can only be  
2 exercised if the period of temporary incapacity exceeds thirty (30) working days.

3 (b) Said temporary incapacity shall terminate upon submission to the Regional  
4 Assembly of a written declaration by the Regional Governor that he has reported back  
5 to office. In cases where the temporary incapacity is due to legal causes, the regional  
6 official concerned shall also submit necessary documents showing that said legal causes  
7 no longer exist.

8 (c) When the incumbent Regional Governor is traveling within the country but  
9 outside his territorial jurisdiction for a period not exceeding three (3) consecutive days,  
10 he may designate in writing, the officer-in-charge of the said office. Such authorization  
11 shall specify the powers and functions that the regional official concerned shall exercise  
12 except the power to appoint, suspend or dismiss employees.

13 (d) In the event, however, that the Regional Governor concerned fails or refuses  
14 to issue such authorization, the Regional Vice-Governor shall have the right to assume  
15 the powers, duties and functions of the said office on the fourth day of absence of the  
16 Regional Governor, subject to the limitations provided in subsection c, hereof.

17 (e) Except as provided above, the Regional Governor shall in no case authorize  
18 any regional official to assume the powers, duties and functions of the office, other  
19 than the Regional Vice-Governor or the highest-ranking Member of the Regional  
20 Assembly, as the case may be.

21 SEC. 51. **Approval of Leaves of Absence.** – Leave of absence of elective  
22 officials of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall be approved as follows:

23 (a) Applications for leave of absence of regional officials, provincial governor,  
24 mayor of a highly urbanized city or an independent component city shall be approved  
25 by the Regional Governor or his duly authorized representative;

26 (b) Applications for leave of absence of other officials and employees other than  
27 those enumerated above shall follow those stipulated in the Local Government Code;  
28 and

29 (c) Applications for leave of the Regional Governor shall be approved by the  
30 President.

31 SEC. 52. **Compensation.** – (a) Unless otherwise provided by law, the Regional  
32 Governor and Regional Vice-Governor shall receive an annual salary equivalent to that  
33 of a department secretary and undersecretary, respectively, of the national

1 government, which shall not be decreased during their tenure. No increase in the salary  
2 of the Regional Governor and Regional Vice-Governor shall take effect until after the  
3 expiration of the term of the Regional Governor and Regional Vice-Governor approving  
4 the same.

5 (b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the Regional Speaker shall receive an  
6 annual salary equivalent to that of the Regional Governor and members of the Regional  
7 Assembly shall receive an annual salary equivalent to the salary of the Regional Vice-  
8 Governor. No increase in salary provided for by law shall take effect until after the  
9 expiration of the term of office of all members of the Regional Assembly approving the  
10 same.

11 (c) All regional elective officials shall not receive, during their tenure, any other  
12 emoluments from the government.

13 SEC. 53. **Accountability.** – (a) *Disclosure.* All regional officials shall, upon their  
14 assumption of office, make a full disclosure of their financial and business interests,  
15 including those of their spouses and unmarried children under eighteen (18) years of  
16 age living in their households. Any member who has a potential conflict of interest that  
17 may arise from the measures filed shall notify the regional assembly. This section shall  
18 be governed by R.A. 6713 or the Code of conduct and ethical standards for public  
19 officials and employees.

20 (b) *Governing law.* Discipline of Regional Elective Officials shall be governed by  
21 Chapter 4, Title Two of Book I of R.A 7160 and other applicable laws. Discipline of  
22 Members of the Regional Assembly shall be governed by their internal rules.

23 (c) *Recall.* Regional elective officials may be subject to recall proceedings as  
24 provided for by Chapter 5, Title Two of Book I of R.A. 7160 and other applicable laws.

25  
26 **ARTICLE VI**

27 **THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

28 SEC. 54. **Executive Authority.** – The executive power in the region shall be  
29 vested in a Regional Governor. He shall exercise such powers and perform such duties  
30 and functions as provided by this Organic Act and other laws.

31 SEC. 55. **Scope of Executive Authority.** – As chief executive of the Regional  
32 Government, the Regional Governor shall exercise control and supervision over all  
33 programs, projects, services and activities of the Regional Government and supervision



over regional line agencies and local government units within the autonomous region subject to existing laws.

SEC. 56. **State of the Region Address.** – The Regional Governor shall deliver the State of the Region Address to the Regional Assembly at the opening of its regular sessions.

SEC. 57. **Submission of Regional Budget.** – The Regional Governor shall submit the proposed budget to the Regional Assembly within thirty (30) days from the opening of every regular session, as the basis of the regional appropriations bill, budget of expenditures and sources of financing, including receipts from existing and proposed revenue measures.

SEC. 58. **Administrative Support.** – The Regional Governor and the different regional departments shall have sufficient administrative and support staff to efficiently and effectively carry out their mandates and the purposes of the regional government.

SEC. 59. **Mandatory Staff.** – The regional autonomous government shall have the following mandatory staff: (1) Regional Executive Secretary, (2) Regional Accountant, (3) Regional Budget Officer, (4) Regional Administrator, (5) Regional Legal Officer, (6) Regional Treasurer, and (7) Regional General Services Officer. In addition thereto, the Regional Governor may, subject to the approval of the Regional Assembly and availability of funds, create other offices deemed necessary.

The Regional Executive Secretary and the heads of the various regional offices and employees under the executive department shall be appointed by the Regional Governor. The appointment of the heads of regional offices requires the concurrence of the majority of the members of the Regional Assembly and compliance to civil service law, rules and regulations and this Organic Act. The Regional Assembly shall act on said appointment within fifteen (15) days from the date of submission otherwise the same shall be deemed confirmed.

The rank and salary grade level of the heads of the different regional departments shall be equivalent to the regional directors of regional line agencies. They shall receive compensation, allowances and other emoluments and benefits allowed by law or ordinance. With the exception of the Regional Executive Secretary, the heads of the regional departments shall be mandatory.

The qualifications of regional appointive officials, their duties and functions, are as follows:



1       **1) Regional Executive Secretary**

- 2       (a) The Regional Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera  
3           shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good moral character, a  
4           holder of a college degree preferably in law, administration or any other related  
5           course from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired  
6           supervisory or managerial experience for at least five (5) years.
- 7       (b) The term of office of the Regional Executive Secretary shall be co-terminus with  
8           that of the appointing authority.
- 9       (c) The Regional Executive Secretary shall, subject to the control and supervision of  
10           the Regional Governor, carry out the following functions:
- 11           1. Directly assist the Regional Governor in the management of the affairs  
12              pertaining to the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera;
  - 13           2. Implement directives, orders and decisions of the Regional Governor;
  - 14           3. Exercise supervision and control over the various units in the Office of the  
15              Regional Governor including their internal administrative requirements;
  - 16           4. Exercise supervision, in behalf of the Regional Governor, over the various  
17              agencies under the Office of the Regional Governor;
  - 18           5. Provide overall coordination in the operation of the Regional Executive  
19              Office;
  - 20           6. Determine and assign matters to the appropriate units in the Office of the  
21              Regional Governor;
  - 22           7. Act on matters referred to the Office of the Regional Governor coming  
23              from the various regional offices and agencies of the government;
  - 24           8. Provide consultative, research, fact-finding and advisory service to the  
25              Regional Governor;
  - 26           9. Assist the Regional Governor in the performance of functions pertaining  
27              to legislation;
  - 28           10. Assist the Regional Governor in the administration of special projects;
  - 29           11. Take charge of matters pertaining to protocol in the Regional  
30              Government and ceremonial functions;
  - 31           12. Provide secretarial and clerical services for the Regional Governor and  
32              other bodies;
  - 33           13. Promulgate such rules and regulations necessary to carry out the  
34              objectives, policies and functions of the Office of the Regional Governor;  
35              and
  - 36           14. Perform such other functions as the Regional Governor may direct.
- 37

1           **2) Regional Accountant**

- 2           (a) The Regional Accountant shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of  
3           good moral character, certified public accountant, and must have acquired  
4           experience in the treasury or accounting service for at least five (5) years.
- 5           (b) The regional accountant shall take charge of both the accounting and internal  
6           audit services of the autonomous region and shall:
- 7               1. Install and maintain an internal audit system in the autonomous region;
  - 8               2. Prepare and submit financial statements to the Regional Governor and to  
9               the Regional Assembly;
  - 10              3. Apprise the Regional Assembly and other government officials on the  
11              financial condition and operations of the autonomous region;
  - 12              4. Certify to the availability of budgetary allotment to which expenditures  
13              and obligations may be properly charged;
  - 14              5. Review supporting documents before preparation of vouchers to  
15              determine completeness of requirements;
  - 16              6. Prepare statements of cash advances, liquidation, salaries, allowances,  
17              reimbursements and remittances pertaining to the autonomous region;
  - 18              7. Prepare statements of journal vouchers and liquidation of the same and  
19              other adjustments related thereto;
  - 20              8. Post individual disbursements to the subsidiary ledger and index cards;
  - 21              9. Maintain individual ledgers for officials and employees of the autonomous  
22              region pertaining to payrolls and deductions;
  - 23              10. Record and post in index cards details of purchased furniture, fixtures,  
24              and equipment, including disposal thereof, if any;
  - 25              11. Account for all issued requests for obligations and maintain and keep all  
26              records and reports related thereto;
  - 27              12. Prepare journals and the analysis of obligations and maintain and keep all  
28              records and reports related thereto; and
  - 29              13. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions  
30              as may be provided by law or ordinance.
- 31

32           **3) Regional Budget Officer**

- 33           (a) The Regional Budget Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a  
34           Cordilleran, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree preferably in  
35           accounting, economics, public administration or any related course from a  
36           recognized college or university, first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent,



1 and must have acquired experience in government budgeting for at least five (5)  
2 years.

3 (b) The budget officer shall take charge of the budget office and shall:

- 4 1. Prepare forms, orders, and circulars embodying instructions on budgetary  
5 and appropriation matters for the signature of the Regional Governor;
- 6 2. Review and consolidate the budget proposals of different departments  
7 and offices of the Regional Government;
- 8 3. Assist the Regional Governor in the preparation of the budget and during  
9 budget hearings;
- 10 4. Study and evaluate budgetary implications of proposed legislation and  
11 submit comments and recommendations thereon;
- 12 5. Submit periodic budgetary reports to the Department of Budget and  
13 Management;
- 14 6. Coordinate with the treasurer, accountant, and the planning officer for the  
15 purpose of budgeting;
- 16 7. Assist the Regional Assembly in reviewing the approved budgets of the  
17 provincial and highly urbanized cities;
- 18 8. Coordinate with the regional planning officer in the formulation of the  
19 regional development plan; and
- 20 9. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions  
21 as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

#### 23 **4) Regional Administrator**

24 (a) The Regional Administrator shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran,  
25 of good moral character, holder of a college degree preferably in law, public  
26 administration or any other related course from a recognized college or university  
27 and must have acquired experience in management and administration work for  
28 at least five (5) years.

29 (b) The term of office of the Regional Administrator shall be co-terminus with that of  
30 the appointing authority.

31 (c) Subject to the control and supervision of the Regional Governor, the Regional  
32 Administrator shall:

- 33 1. Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof by the Regional  
34 Governor, implement the same particularly those which have to do with  
35 the management and administration-related programs and projects which

- 1 the Regional Governor is empowered to implement and which the  
2 Regional Assembly is empowered to provide under this Organic Act;
- 3 2. Assist in the coordination of the work of all the officials of the autonomous  
4 region, under the supervision, direction, and control of the Regional  
5 Governor, and for this purpose, may convene the chiefs of offices and  
6 other officials of the autonomous region;
- 7 3. Establish and maintain a sound personnel program for the autonomous  
8 region designed to promote career development and uphold the merit  
9 principle in the local government service;
- 10 4. Conduct a continuing organizational development of the autonomous  
11 region with the end in view of instituting effective administrative reforms;
- 12 5. Be in the frontline of the delivery of administrative support services,  
13 particularly those related to the situations during and in the aftermath of  
14 man-made and natural disasters and calamities;
- 15 6. Recommend to the Regional Assembly and advise the Regional Governor,  
16 as the case may be, on all other matters relative to the management and  
17 administration of the regional autonomous government; and
- 18 7. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions  
19 as may be prescribed by law or by ordinance.
- 20

## 21 **5) Regional Legal Officer**

- 22 (a) The Regional Legal Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran,  
23 of good moral character, member of the Philippine Bar, and must have been in  
24 the practice of law for at least five (5) years.
- 25 (b) The term of office of the Regional Legal Officer shall be co-terminus with that of  
26 the appointing authority.
- 27 (c) The Regional Legal Officer shall be the chief legal counsel of the regional  
28 autonomous government, shall take charge of the office of legal services, and  
29 shall perform the following:
- 30 1. Formulate measures for the consideration of the Regional Assembly and  
31 provide legal assistance and support to the Regional Governor;
- 32 2. Develop plans and strategies and upon approval thereof by the Regional  
33 Governor, implement the same, particularly those which have to do with  
34 programs and projects related to legal services which the Regional  
35 Governor is empowered to implement and which the Regional Assembly is  
36 empowered to provide under this Organic Act;



3. Recommend measures and advise the Regional Governor on all other matters related to upholding the rule of law;
4. Be in the frontline of protecting human rights and prosecuting any violations thereof, particularly those which occur during and in the aftermath of man-made or natural disasters or calamities;
5. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.
6. In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the legal officer shall:
  - i. Represent the regional autonomous government in all civil actions and special proceedings wherein the autonomous region or any official thereof, in his official capacity, is a party;
  - ii. When required by the Regional Governor, draft ordinances, contracts, bonds, leases and other instruments, involving any interest of the autonomous region and provide comments and recommendations on any instrument already drawn;
  - iii. Render opinion in writing on any question of law when requested to do so by the Regional Governor;
  - iv. Investigate or cause to be investigated any official or employee of the Regional Government for administrative neglect or misconduct in office and recommend appropriate action to the Regional Governor;
  - v. Investigate or cause to be investigated any person, firm or corporation holding any franchise or exercising any public privilege for failure to comply with any term or condition in the grant of such franchise or privilege by the Regional Government, and recommending appropriate action to the Regional Governor;
  - vi. When directed by the Regional Governor, initiate and prosecute in the interest of the autonomous region any civil action on any bond, lease or other contract upon any breach or violation thereof; and
  - vii. Review and submit recommendations on ordinances approved and execute orders issued.

## **6) Regional Treasurer**

- (a) The Regional Treasurer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good moral character, holder of a college degree preferably in commerce, public administration or law from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired experience in treasury or accounting service for at least five (5) years.

(b) The Regional Treasurer shall take charge of the Treasury Office, perform the duties provided for under Book II of the Local Government Code, and shall:

1. Advise the Regional Governor and other Regional Government officials concerned regarding the disposition of government funds, and on such other matters relative to public finance;
2. Take custody of and exercise proper management of the funds of the autonomous region;
3. Take charge of the disbursement of all Regional Government funds and such other funds the custody of which may be entrusted by law or other competent authority;
4. Maintain and update the tax information system of the autonomous region; and
5. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

## **7) Regional General Services Officer**

(a) The Regional General Services Officer shall be a citizen of the Philippines and a Cordilleran, of good moral character, holder of a college degree preferably on public administration, business administration and management or any other related course from a recognized college or university, and must have acquired experience in general services, including management of supply, property, solid waste disposal, and general sanitation, for at least five (5) years.

(b) The Regional General Services Officer shall take charge of the Office on General Services and shall:

1. Formulate measures for the consideration of the Regional Governor and provide technical assistance and support in carrying out measures to ensure the delivery of basic services and provision of adequate facilities pursuant to the Local Government Code and this Organic Act which require general services expertise and technical support services;
2. Develop plans and strategies, and upon approval thereof by the Regional Governor implement the same, particularly those which have to do with the general services supportive of the welfare of the inhabitants which the Regional Governor is empowered to implement;
3. Be in the frontline of general services related activities, such as the possible or imminent destruction or damage to records, supplies, properties, and structures and the orderly and sanitary clearing up of waste materials or



debris, particularly during and in the aftermath of man-made and natural calamities and disasters;

4. Recommend and advise the Regional Governor on all matters relative to general services;

5. In addition to the foregoing duties and functions, the General Services Officer shall:

- i. Take custody of and be accountable for all properties, real or personal, owned by the autonomous government and those granted to it in the form of donation, reparation, assistance and counterpart of joint projects;
- ii. With the approval of the Regional Governor, assign building or land space to regional officials, who by law, are entitled to such space. Recommend to the Regional Governor reasonable rental rates for Regional Government properties, whether real or personal, which will be leased to public or private entities;
- iii. Recommend to the Regional Governor reasonable rental rates of private properties which may be leased for the official use of the Regional Government;
- iv. Maintain and supervise janitorial, security, government public buildings and other real property, whether owned or leased by the Regional Government;
- v. Collate and disseminate information regarding prices, shipping and other costs of supplies and other items commonly used by the Regional Government;
- vi. Perform archival and record management with respect to records of offices and departments of the Regional Government;
- vii. Perform all other functions pertaining to supply and property management heretofore performed by the Regional Government Treasurer and enforce policies on records creation, maintenance, and disposal; and
- viii. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

SEC. 60. ***Cordillera Development Council.*** – There shall be a Cordillera Development Council (CDC) which shall function as the main planning and advisory body of the autonomous government, setting the direction of economic and social

development of the autonomous region and through which regional development efforts shall be coordinated.

SEC. 61. **Composition.** – The CDC, which shall be headed by the Regional Governor, shall be composed of the Regional Governor as chair, Private Sector Representative as co-chair, the Regional Director of NEDA as vice-chair, and the following as members:

- (a) All the provincial governors, the city and capital town mayors in ARC.
- (b) Two (2) members of the Regional Assembly to be designated by its presiding officer.
- (c) Private sector representatives of duly accredited private sector and non-government or people's organizations, provided that their composition shall not be more than one-fourth of the total membership.
- (d) Regional heads of line agencies who are members of the NEDA Board.
- (e) The Council may designate special non-voting members coming from both the public and private sectors, upon concurrence of the majority of its regular members.

SEC. 62. **Technical Support.** – The regional office of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) shall serve as the secretariat and technical operations arm of the Council.

SEC. 63. **Functions.** – The Cordillera Development Council shall:

- (a) Coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of short- and long- term regional development plans and investment programs, regional physical framework plans and special development plans, including the formulation of policy recommendations.
- (b) Integrate approved development plans of provinces and cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government owned and controlled corporations and special development authorities in the autonomous region into the regional development plan.
- (c) Review, prioritize, and endorse to the autonomous government the annual and multi-year sectoral investment programs of the autonomous region for funding and implementation.
- (d) Review and endorse to the national government the annual budgets of agency regional offices, state colleges and universities and special development authorities.



- 1 (e) Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the  
2 autonomous region to support regional development objectives, policies,  
3 strategies.
- 4 (f) Review and endorse national plans, programs and projects proposed for  
5 implementation in the autonomous region.
- 6 (g) As required by the Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC), review and  
7 endorse projects of national government agencies that have impact on the  
8 region and projects of LGUs in the region requiring national government  
9 exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government  
10 budget appropriations or subsidies, among others.
- 11 (h) Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional  
12 and special development projects such as those involving several agencies or  
13 LGUs.
- 14 (i) Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken  
15 by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities,  
16 government-owned and/or controlled corporations and special development  
17 authorities in the autonomous region.
- 18 (j) Perform other related functions and activities as may be necessary to promote  
19 and sustain the socio-economic development of the autonomous region.

20 SEC. 64. ***Creation of Committees.*** – The Council may create appropriate technical  
21 and sectoral committees to assist in its work.

22 SEC. 65. ***Existing Committees.*** – Existing regional coordinating committees that  
23 are created by various laws and currently attached to specific agencies, and ad-hoc  
24 program or project-based steering committees, such as, the Development  
25 Administration Committee, Economic Development Committee, Social Development  
26 Committee, Infrastructure Development Committee, Watershed and Environmental  
27 Management Committee, Committee on Indigenous Peoples’ Concerns, Regional Land  
28 Use Committee, Regional Gender and Development Committee, Regional Project  
29 Monitoring Committee, Regional Competitiveness Committee, Regional Development  
30 Budget Coordinating Committee, Regional Statistical Coordination Committee, and the  
31 Cordillera Geographic Information System Network, shall be placed under the umbrella  
32 of the CDC. Secretariat work of these inter-agency committees shall continue to be  
33 provided by their mother agency.

34 **ARTICLE VII**

35 **THE REGIONAL VICE-GOVERNOR**

SEC. 66. **Functions.** – The Regional Vice-Governor shall assist the Regional Governor in the day to day operation of the Regional Government, and shall:

1. Assume the office of the Regional Governor for the unexpired term of the latter in the event of a permanent vacancy as provided in this Organic Act;
2. Exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions of the Regional Governor in cases of temporary vacancy as provided in this Organic Act;
3. Exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions as may be prescribed by law.

The Regional Vice-Governor may be appointed to the position of head of regional office as may be created by the Regional Assembly, without the need of confirmation of the Regional Assembly and the Civil Service Commission.

## ARTICLE VIII

## THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

SEC. 67. **Legislative Authority.** – The legislative power of the Regional Government in the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall be vested in the Regional Assembly, except to the extent reserved by the Constitution and this Organic Act on initiative and referendum. Within its territorial jurisdiction and subject to the provisions of the Constitution and national laws, the Regional Assembly shall have legislative powers over those functions enumerated under Section 25.

SEC. 68. ***Regional Speaker*** – There shall be a Regional Speaker, who shall be elected, from among the members of the Regional Assembly, on its first regular session. The Assembly shall promulgate its rules and regulations for the conduct of its proceedings.

The Speaker, as the political and administrative head of the Assembly, is responsible for the overall management of the proceedings, activities, resources, facilities and employees of the Assembly. The Speaker shall:

- a. Prepare the legislative agenda for every regular session, establish systems and procedures to ensure full deliberation and swift approval of measures included therein, and may, for the purpose, avail of the assistance of the Deputy Speakers, the Majority Leader, the chairpersons of the standing committees and other Members of the Regional Assembly;



1           b. Conduct regular monthly caucus of all Members of the Regional Assembly or  
2 groups thereof or as often as may be necessary to discuss priority measures and to  
3 facilitate dialogue, consensus and action on issues and concerns affecting the Regional  
4 Government and the performance of its functions;

5           c. Exercise general supervision over all committees and, in furtherance thereof,  
6 conduct regular monthly meetings with the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of all  
7 standing and special committees to set legislative targets, review performance in the  
8 attainment of targets, ensure that the priority legislative measures of committees are  
9 attuned to the legislative agenda of the Regional Assembly, and resolve such other  
10 issues and concerns that affect the operations and performance of the committees;

11          d. Establish, as far as practicable, an efficient information management system  
12 of the secretariat utilizing among others, modern digital technology, that can:

13                 1. Facilitate access to and dissemination of data and information needed  
14 in legislation inclusive of facilitating real time translation of plenary proceedings  
15 in the major Philippine dialects and languages;

16                 2. Provide a simplified and comprehensive process of gathering, recording,  
17 storage and retrieval of data and information relating to activities and  
18 proceedings of the Regional Assembly;

19                 3. Sustain a public information program that will provide accessible, timely  
20 and accurate information relating to the Regional Assembly, its Members and  
21 officers, its committees and its legislative concerns inclusive of facilitating, as far  
22 as practicable, broadcast coverage of plenary and committee proceedings;

23  
24          e. Establish an efficient and effective system to monitor and evaluate the  
25 performance of legislative tasks and duties of the Regional Assembly, its Members and  
26 its committees;

27          f. Designate a Member as temporary presiding officer after informing the Deputy  
28 Speakers: Provided, That any such designation shall be effective for one session day  
29 only;

30          g. Take appropriate measures as may be deemed advisable or as the Regional  
31 Assembly may direct, to preserve order and decorum in the session hall, the galleries,  
32 lobbies, chambers, offices, corridors and premises of the Regional Assembly;

1 h. Sign all acts, resolutions, memorials, writs, warrants and subpoenae that may  
2 be issued by or upon order of the Regional Assembly;

3 i. Perform administrative functions such as, among others:

4 1. Appointment of personnel of the Regional Assembly with authority to  
5 delegate this power;

6 2. Suspension, dismissal or imposition of other disciplinary measures on  
7 the personnel of the Regional Assembly in accordance with Civil Service rules:  
8 Provided, That the suspension or dismissal of the Regional Secretary General and  
9 the Regional Sergeant-at-Arms shall take effect only upon the concurrence of the  
10 majority of all the Members of the Regional Assembly;

11 3. Consolidation or splitting of vacant positions carrying salaries and  
12 wages which may be increased or reduced in the process, or creation of new  
13 positions in accordance with the Regional Appropriations Act: Provided, That the  
14 total amount involved shall not exceed the total amount appropriated for the  
15 salaries and wages of the personnel of the Regional Assembly;

16 4. Implementation of merit-based policies and programs on personnel  
17 recruitment, training and development, promotions, incentives and benefits to  
18 ensure that the Regional Assembly has a corps of competent professionals able  
19 to provide needed legislative support services; and

20 5. Review, approve, and sign contracts entered into by the Regional  
21 Assembly, with the authority to delegate this power.

22  
23 j. Prepare the annual budget of the Regional Assembly;

24 k. Prepare, in consultation with the appropriate committee of the Regional  
25 Assembly, the rules and regulations governing public access to personal data and  
26 related information, including statements of assets and liabilities, of Members of the  
27 Regional Assembly;

28 l. Develop through an appropriate entity of the Regional Assembly a system for  
29 drug testing, which may provide for the testing of any Member, officer, or employee of  
30 the Regional Assembly, and otherwise shall be comparable in scope to the system for  
31 drug testing in the executive branch of the Regional Government. Provided, That the  
32 expenses of the system may be paid from applicable accounts of the Regional Assembly  
33 for official expenses; and



1           o. Require the submission of performance reports at the end of every regular  
2 session and fiscal year from the committee chairpersons, the Regional Secretary  
3 General and the Regional Sergeant-at-Arms, and such other reports as may be required  
4 from all concerned officers and offices of the Regional Assembly.

5           The Regional Speaker shall be the permanent head of delegation and  
6 representative of the Regional Assembly in all local or international parliamentary  
7 gatherings and organizations: Provided, That Regional Speaker may designate any  
8 Member of the Regional Assembly to be the representative of the Regional Speaker and  
9 may also determine, upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, in consultation  
10 with the Minority Leader, who shall constitute the Assembly's delegation to any local or  
11 international conference or forum of parliamentarians and legislators and the secretariat  
12 support staff to be mobilized for the purpose.

13           SEC. 69. **Enactment of Laws and Resolutions.** – The Regional Assembly shall  
14 enact ordinances, approve resolutions and appropriate funds for the general welfare of  
15 the region and its inhabitants as well as for the efficient and effective operation of the  
16 Regional Government.

17           SEC. 70. **Creation, Division, Merger and Abolition of Local Government**  
18 **Units.** – The Regional Assembly may, by law create, divide, merge or abolish  
19 municipalities or barangays. The municipalities or barangays created, divided or merged  
20 shall be entitled to their appropriate share in the national taxes or Internal Revenue  
21 Allotment (IRA). Provided, that it shall be approved by a majority of the votes cast in a  
22 plebiscite in the political units directly affected.

23           SEC. 71. **Administrative Support.** – The Regional Assembly shall have an  
24 administrative and support staff. Each member shall have at least three (3) confidential  
25 Legislative Assistants whose qualifications, rank and salary grade level shall be  
26 equivalent to regional executive assistants. Their term of service shall however be co-  
27 terminus with their overseer.

28           SEC. 72. **Regular and Special Sessions.** – The Regional Assembly shall start  
29 its regular session on the first Monday of July, and by resolution fix the day, time and  
30 place of its regular sessions, which shall be held at least once a week. However, the  
31 Assembly may be called to a special session by the Regional Speaker or the Regional  
32 Governor whenever necessary and a notice of meeting shall be sent to the member's  
33 place of residence at least twenty-four (24) hours before the special session is held.  
34 Unless otherwise concurred in by two-thirds (2/3) votes of the members, there being a  
35 quorum, no other matters may be considered at a special session except those stated in



1 the notice. The Regional Assembly may invite the President and other government  
2 officials to address it.

3 SEC. 73. **Sessions and Quorum.** – A majority of all the members of the  
4 Regional Assembly shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may  
5 adjourn from day to day and may compel the attendance of absent members in such  
6 manner, and under such penalties as the Assembly may provide in its rules.

7 On the first regular session following the election of its members, and within  
8 ninety (90) days thereafter, the Regional Assembly shall adopt or update its rules of  
9 proceedings which shall include, among other things, the organization of the Assembly  
10 and the election of its officers, creation of standing committees, the time, place and  
11 manner of convening its regular and special sessions, the conduct and discipline of its  
12 members, the conduct and discipline of every person present during its session, the  
13 preparation and publication of its journal, the determination of quorum, and the  
14 necessary votes to pass any measure, and recall proceedings in accordance with the  
15 Local Government Code.

16 SEC. 74. **Law.** – (a) Every bill shall embrace only one (1) subject which shall be  
17 expressed in the title thereof.

18 (b) No bill shall become a law unless it has passed three readings on separate days,  
19 and printed copies thereof in its final form have been distributed to the members  
20 three (3) days before its passage, except when the Regional Governor certifies to  
21 the necessity of its immediate enactment to meet a public calamity or emergency  
22 affecting the region, or the component provinces, cities, municipalities or barangays.

23 (c) On third reading of a bill, no amendment thereto shall be allowed, and the vote  
24 thereon shall be taken immediately thereafter, and the yeas and nays entered in  
25 the Journal.

26 (d) Every bill passed by the Regional Assembly shall, before it becomes a law, be  
27 presented to the Regional Governor. If the Regional Governor approves the  
28 same, the Regional Governor shall sign it, otherwise, the Regional Governor shall  
29 veto it and return the same to the Regional Assembly with the objections. The  
30 Regional Governor shall communicate the veto on any bill to the Regional  
31 Assembly within ten (10) days from receipt thereof, otherwise, it shall become a  
32 law as if it was signed.

33 Upon receipt of the veto, the Regional Assembly shall enter the objections in its  
34 journal and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds



1 (2/3) of all the members of the Regional Assembly shall agree to pass the bill, it  
2 shall become a law.

- 3 (e) The Regional Governor shall have the power to veto any particular item or items  
4 in an appropriation or revenue, but the veto shall not affect the item or items to  
5 which the Regional Governor does not object.

6 SEC. 75. **People's Question Hour.** – There shall be a people's hour at least once a  
7 month or as often as the rules of the Regional Assembly may provide, which shall be  
8 included in the Order of Business, during which, upon initiative of any Member of the  
9 Cabinet, may, with the consent of the Regional Governor, or upon the request of the  
10 Regional Assembly, appear and answer questions and interpellations by members of the  
11 Assembly on any matter pertaining to the Cabinet Member's department.

12 The Regional Assembly or any of its committees may conduct inquiries in aid of  
13 legislation in accordance with its duly published rules of procedure. The rights and  
14 dignity of persons appearing in or affected by such inquiries shall be respected.

15 SEC. 76. **Immunity from Suit.** – No member shall be questioned or be held liable  
16 in any other place for any speech or debate in the Regional Assembly or in any  
17 committee thereof.

18 SEC. 77. **Appropriations Bill.** – The Regional Assembly shall pass an  
19 appropriations bill for the ensuing year at or before the end of each year, based on the  
20 budget of expenditures and sources of funds submitted to it by the Regional Governor.

- 21 (a) No provision or enactment shall be embraced in the regional appropriations bill,  
22 unless it relates specifically to some particular appropriations therein. Any such  
23 provision or enactment shall be limited in its operation to the appropriation to  
24 which it relates.

- 25 (b) The procedure in approving appropriations for the Regional Assembly shall  
26 strictly follow the same procedure for approving appropriations for the regional  
27 executive department.

- 28 (c) A special appropriations bill shall specify the purpose for which it is intended, and  
29 shall be supported by funds actually available as certified by the Regional  
30 Treasurer or to be raised by a corresponding revenue proposal therein.

- 31 (d) No law shall be passed authorizing any transfer of appropriations.

- 32 (e) The Regional Assembly may not increase the appropriations recommended by  
33 the Regional Governor for the operation of the Regional Government as specified  
34 in the budget. The form, content and manner of preparation of the budget shall  
35 be prescribed by regional law: Provided, however, that pending the enactment of

1 such a regional law, the budgeting process of the Regional Government shall be  
2 governed by existing national laws and rules and regulations prescribed by the  
3 Department of Budget and Management.

4 SEC. 78. ***Expenditure of Public Funds.*** – No money shall be paid out of the  
5 regional treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation made by regional law.

6 (a) No money or property shall be appropriated, applied, paid or used, directly or  
7 indirectly, for the use, benefit or support, of any sect, church, denomination,  
8 sectarian institution, or system of religion or for the use, benefit or support of  
9 any priest, preacher, minister or other religious teacher or dignitary as such,  
10 except when such priest, preacher, minister or dignitary is assigned to the  
11 regional police or government orphanage and rehabilitation centers or similar  
12 institutions.

13 (b) All money collected on any regional tax levied for a special purpose shall be  
14 treated as a special fund and paid out for such purpose only. If the purpose for  
15 which a special fund was created has been fulfilled or abandoned, the balance, if  
16 any, shall be transferred to the general fund of the Regional Government.

17 SEC. 79. ***Certified True Copies of Law.*** – The Regional Assembly shall, within ten  
18 (10) working days from approval thereof, submit to the President and to both Houses of  
19 Congress a certified true copy of all laws and resolutions it passed.

20 SEC. 80. ***Creation of Offices.*** – The Regional Assembly may create such other  
21 offices and positions as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the regional  
22 government subject to availability of funds.

23 SEC. 81. ***Program for Development.*** – Subject to national laws and, sound public  
24 administration principles, exercising the corporate powers of the Regional Government  
25 under the Constitution and RA 7160, the Regional Assembly shall evolve a program for  
26 generating development funds to accelerate social and economic development in the  
27 region. The Regional Government shall implement the same, after conducting public  
28 consultation. Provided, that when regional revenues are insufficient, the difference shall  
29 be funded by the national government.

30  
31 SEC. 82. ***Approval of Plans.*** – The Regional Assembly shall approve by ordinance  
32 the recommended regional physical framework plan, the regional development plan, the  
33 regional development investment program, the regional annual investment plan and  
34 regional annual budget within the prescribed timetable.



SEC. 83. ***Enactment of Necessary Legislation.*** – When the need arises, the Regional Assembly shall enact laws and necessary legislative measures that shall strengthen and supplement the implementation of national laws, devolved functions and address conflicting laws.

## ARTICLE IX

## PATRIMONY, ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 84. ***Coordination and Cooperation.*** – The Regional Government, with the support of the national government, shall, pursuant to regional autonomy and poverty alleviation initiate, stimulate, facilitate, support and coordinate development in the region towards attaining equitable distribution of opportunities, income, and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services available to Cordillerans and an expanding productivity and income as the key to raising the quality of life for all:

- a. The national government shall provide financial support and assistance to the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera by appropriating such sums as may be necessary to accelerate the development of the autonomous region, on top of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) provided therewith and the Local Government Units as well as the allocations already provided through the regional line agencies.
- b. The national government shall consult and coordinate with the autonomous Regional Government before programs and projects are undertaken in the autonomous region.

SEC. 85. ***Cordillera Development Plan.*** – The Regional Government through the Cordillera Development Council shall formulate its development plans taking into consideration the Cordilleran’s unique needs and aspirations, consistent with national development goals. The Development Plan shall include the promotion of growth and full employment, human development, and address social and economic inequities that have resulted from decades of neglect, historical injustice, poverty and inequality.

SEC. 86. ***Control and Supervision over Natural Resources.*** – The Regional Government shall have control and supervision over natural resources in accordance to this Organic Act.

SEC. 87. ***Preferential Rights of Cordillerans to Utilize and Develop Natural Resources.*** – The exploration, development, utilization, and enjoyment of natural

resources shall be allowed to citizens of the Philippines and to private enterprises, including corporations, cooperatives, and similar collective organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) of their capital investment or capital stocks directly controlled or owned by Filipinos: Provided, that priority be given to Cordillerans in the implementation of programs, projects, and activities related to these natural resources in the region and shall comply with the provisions of the Constitution and this Organic Act.

SEC. 88. ***Comprehensive Framework for Sustainable Development.*** – The Regional Government shall develop a comprehensive framework for sustainable development through the proper conservation, utilization and development of natural resources. Such framework shall guide the Regional Government in adopting programs, policies, and mechanisms that focus on the protection of the environment, and reduction of vulnerability from climate change.

SEC. 89. ***Development of Lands 18° Above in Slope.*** – The Regional Government in partnership with the communities, especially the indigenous peoples or indigenous cultural communities, and their government units, and support of the national government shall adopt measures for the development of communities occupying lands eighteen degrees in slope or over, by providing the necessary infrastructure, financial and technical support.

SEC. 90. ***Transportation and Communication System.*** – The Regional Government shall, in coordination with the national government, establish a transportation and communication system interconnecting the various areas of the autonomous region with each other and to other regions adjacent to the Cordilleras. Likewise, the Regional Government in close coordination with component local government units shall plan, construct, modernize and maintain rural and urban infrastructure facilities and utilities, including alternative transport systems within critical environments.

SEC. 91. ***Agrarian Reform.*** – Subject to ecological considerations, the Regional Government shall adopt and implement a comprehensive rural agrarian reform program, as well as an urban development program consistent with the Constitution and national laws and policies to ensure the just and sustainable utilization of land within its jurisdiction.



1 SEC. 92. ***Environmental Protection.*** – The Regional Government shall develop  
2 standards pertaining to the protection, conservation, and enhancement, of the  
3 environment and natural resources, appropriate to the socio- cultural and  
4 environmental uniqueness of the Cordillera.

5 SEC. 93. ***Transfer of Existing Nature Reserves and Protected Areas.*** – The  
6 management and protection of nature reserves and aquatic parks, forests, watershed  
7 reservations, and other protected areas in the Autonomous Region that have already  
8 been defined by and under the authority of the National Government shall be  
9 transferred to the Regional Government.

10 The Regional Transition Committee composed of the Regional Governor,  
11 Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Commission on Indigenous  
12 Peoples, representatives of IPs and ICCs affected, as well as other relevant government  
13 agencies shall cause the process of transferring these areas including the conduct of  
14 surveys of all affected areas and the planning and transition for each and every  
15 protected area. Such process shall be completed within a period not exceeding two  
16 years.

17 SEC. 94. ***Renewable and other Energy Resources and Extractive Industries.***  
18 – Policies on Renewable and other energy resources and extractive industries shall be  
19 drawn up by the Regional Assembly in accordance with its Comprehensive Sustainable  
20 Development Plan, as well as its over-all medium-term and long- term Regional  
21 Development Plan.

22 SEC. 95. ***Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements.*** – The Regional  
23 Governor shall initiate and recommend to the President the applications for financial  
24 and technical assistance agreements covering mineral resources within the region

25 SEC. 96. ***Participation in National Development Planning.*** – To ensure that  
26 the Regional development plans are reflected in the national development plans, the  
27 Regional Government shall participate in national development planning. The Regional  
28 Governor shall be a member of the Board of the National Economic and Development  
29 Authority.

## 30 ARTICLE X

### 31 SOURCES OF REVENUES AND OTHER FISCAL MATTERS

32 SEC. 97. ***Share from the National Revenues.*** – To conserve, protect and  
33 develop the national patrimony and heritage located in the Autonomous Region of the  
34 Cordillera, and devolved to the region by this Organic Act, and to fund its operations,

1 the Regional Government shall have a share of the national revenues which include the  
2 following:

3 (a) *Three percent (3%) of the National Internal Revenue Taxes.* The Regional  
4 Government shall have a share in the national internal revenue taxes equivalent  
5 to 3 percent based on the collection of the third fiscal year preceding the current  
6 fiscal year. Eighty percent (80%) of such share shall be appropriated in the  
7 annual regional budget for development projects. The internal revenue allotment  
8 share of the Regional Government shall be released directly to the Regional  
9 Government Treasurer and shall not be subject to any lien or holdback that may  
10 be imposed by the national government for whatever purpose.

11 (b) *Forty percent (40%) Share of the National Wealth Tax.* The Regional  
12 Government shall have a separate forty percent (40%) share of the gross  
13 collections in the preceding fiscal year from mining taxes, royalties,  
14 environmental services, forestry and fishery charges, energy production charges,  
15 and such other taxes, fees and charges, including related surcharges, interests  
16 and fines derived from the utilization and development of the national wealth  
17 within its territorial jurisdiction. Provided that the share in national wealth shall  
18 be used for the preservation and further development of the environment.

19  
20 The Regional Government shall have a share of one and one-half percent (1.5%) of  
21 the gross sales or receipts derived from the utilization and development of the national  
22 wealth within their territorial jurisdiction. This provision shall be applicable to all  
23 corporations, partnership, individuals and other entities including government agencies  
24 and government owned or controlled corporations engaged in the utilization and  
25 development of the national wealth within the region irrespective of existing contrary  
26 laws, rules and regulations of national application.

27 The share in the preceding paragraph shall be distributed in the following manner:

- 28 (1) Province / Highly Urbanized City – Twenty percent (20%)  
29 (2) Component City/ Municipality – Forty percent (40%)  
30 (3) Barangay – Thirty percent (30%)  
31 (4) Region – Ten percent (10%)  
32

33 (c) *Two percent (2%) share out of the Economic Zones Tax.* The Regional  
34 Government shall have a separate two percent (2%) share out of the five  
35 percent (5%) final tax on gross income earned or equivalent to forty percent



1 (40%) of total tax paid by businesses within the economic zones found in the  
2 Cordillera, in addition to the existing shares of the local government units of two  
3 percent (2%).

4 (d) *Twenty percent (20%) Share of Excess in Value Added Tax.* The ARC shall have  
5 a separate twenty percent (20%) share of the excess in VAT collections from the  
6 immediately preceding year within the territorial jurisdiction of the autonomous  
7 region. The fund shall support cottage industry programs.

8 Local Government Units shall have a separate twenty percent (20%) share of the  
9 excess in VAT collections from the immediately preceding year.

10 (e) *Fifteen percent (15%) Share of Total Excise Tax.* The ARC shall have a separate  
11 fifteen percent (15%) share of the total excise tax collection on all products  
12 subject to excise tax within the territorial jurisdiction of the autonomous region  
13 for the second calendar year preceding the year of distribution, in addition to the  
14 existing shares of the local government units.

15 Local Government Units shall have a separate fifteen percent (15%) share from the  
16 total excise tax collection on locally manufactured virginia-type cigarettes for the second  
17 year preceding the year of distribution.

18 (f) *Fifteen percent (15%) Share of Incremental Excise Tax in Burley and Native*  
19 *Tobacco Products.* The Regional Government shall have a separate fifteen  
20 percent (15%) share of the excise tax collected on burley and native tobacco  
21 products collected within the region.

22 Local Government Units shall have a separate fifteen percent (15%) share of the  
23 excise tax collected on burley and native tobacco products.

24 (g) *Forty percent (40%) Share of Renewable and other energy Tax.* The Regional  
25 Government shall have a separate forty percent (40%) of the special privilege  
26 tax on Renewable and other energy resources developed for the maintenance of  
27 watersheds and social and economic development of the upstream host  
28 communities.

29  
30 Local Government Units' share from the renewable and other energy resources tax  
31 shall be based on the computation provided under the Local Government Code (RA  
32 7160).

33 (h) Three percent (3%) of net income of Philippine Amusement and Gaming  
34 Corporation (PAGCOR) and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) for

1 construction and maintenance of school buildings, hospitals and related  
2 structures and services.

3 (i) Shares in future tax impositions by the national government.

4 SEC. 98. **Downstream Benefits.** – The ARC shall be entitled to one and one-half  
5 percent (1.5%) of the gross receipts from the utilization of national wealth sourced or  
6 emanating from the Autonomous Region by persons, individual or juridical entities  
7 operating outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Autonomous Region.

8 SEC. 99. **Sources of Regional Government Revenues.** – The ARC shall be  
9 entitled to the following sources of revenues:

- 10 a. Fees and charges imposed by the Regional Government;
- 11 b. Taxes, fees, or charges for the registration of motor vehicles and for the  
12 issuances of all kinds of licenses or permit for the driving thereof, except tricycles  
13 which shall be registered with the city or municipality within whose territorial  
14 boundaries they are operated;
- 15 c. Shares and revenue generated from the operations of public utilities within the  
16 autonomous region;
- 17 d. Appropriations, shares in the internal revenue taxes, block grants, and other  
18 budgetary allocations coming from the central government or national  
19 government, and
- 20 e. Block grants derived from economic agreements or conventions entered into or  
21 authorized by the Regional Assembly, donations, endowments, foreign  
22 assistance, and other forms of aid, subject to the pertinent provisions of the  
23 Constitution.

24 SEC. 100. **Power of Taxation.** – The ARC shall have the power to create its own  
25 sources of revenues and to levy fees, charges and taxes subject to such guidelines and  
26 limitations of the Constitution and this Act, consistent with the basic policy of local  
27 autonomy. It shall likewise have the power to grant incentives or exemption on fees  
28 and charges which it is empowered to impose under this Act.

29  
30 SEC. 101. **Situs of Taxation.** – All corporations, partnerships, and other entities,  
31 including government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations directly  
32 engaged in business in the region shall pay their corresponding taxes, fees, and  
33 charges to the province, city, municipality or barangays where such establishments are  
34 conducting their business operations irrespective of the location of their principal or  
35 main offices.



SEC. 102. ***Appropriations from the National Government.*** – The national government shall continue to provide appropriations for the regular operations and programs of devolved line agencies in the region to be prepared by the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera and incorporated under the General Appropriations Act. The National Government shall provide appropriations for the mandatory organizational structure and positions of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera and the latter may access other special purpose funds appropriated in the national budget.

SEC. 103. ***Donations to the Regional Government.*** – Donations or grants to the region to be used in undertaking projects in health, education, culture, youth and sports development, housing, science and technology, and in economic development, shall be deductible in full in determining the taxable income of the donor or grantor. Provided, that the validation and certification processes for such donations or grants shall have been done according to regional law.

SEC. 104. **Trade Agreements.** – The Regional Governor, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and national laws, and upon the recommendation of the Cordillera Development Council may enter into agreements or trade compacts and contract loans subject to the ratification of the Regional Assembly to generate grants and foreign loans for development of the region.

SEC. 105. ***Limitations on Contracting of Loans.*** – The Regional Governor may contract loans only in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and national laws and subject to the approval of the Regional Assembly.

SEC. 106. ***Banks and other financial institutions.*** – The ARC shall encourage the establishment of banks and other financial institutions and their branches to facilitate the accumulation of capital and investment and the delivery of credit assistance to business in the region.

## ARTICLE XI

**AGRICULTURE, AGRARIAN REFORM,**

**TRADE AND INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND COOPERATIVE**

SEC. 107. ***Agrarian Reform and Sustainable Agricultural and Fisheries Development.*** – Consistent with applicable laws, the Regional Government shall, as a basic policy, promote agrarian reform and sustainable agricultural development within the principles of social equity and poverty alleviation, food security and food sufficiency, global competitiveness, fair trade, rational use of resources.

- (a) The Regional Government shall ensure that basic agricultural support services and infrastructure be accessible to the small and marginalized farmers and fisher folks. It shall likewise promote agribusiness and full employment based on a sound agricultural development and agrarian reform.
- (b) The Regional Government shall put special emphasis on production towards self-sufficiency of staple food commodities and shall at all times guarantee the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe food commodities.
- (c) The Regional Government shall work on the improvement of the quality and value of raw and processed agri-based products as a means to enhance competitiveness of the agriculture and fisheries sectors in the domestic and global markets.
- (d) The Regional Government shall formulate and implement measures to promote indigenous concept of farming and protect the farmers from unfair trade practices and unfair competition.
- (e) The Regional Government shall ensure the equitable and rational distribution of public resources and investments in order to obtain the optimum returns on investments and to benefit a greater number of constituents.
- (f) The Regional Government shall always consider the limited carrying capacity of the region's natural and agricultural resources in the development of agricultural and fisheries programs and interventions.

SEC. 108. ***Development of Water Resources.*** – The Regional Government shall give top priority to the conservation, protection, testing, utilization and development of water resources for agriculture, fisheries development, domestic water supply and power development. It shall enact appropriate legislation which shall enhance, develop, conserve, and protect natural fishery resources especially on specie endemic to the Cordillera.

SEC. 109. ***Promoting the Rights of Fisher Folks.*** – The Regional Government shall recognize, promote, and protect the rights and welfare of fisher folks, their associations and cooperatives. The provinces and cities concerned shall support to subsistence fisher folk through adequate funds, appropriate technology and research, marketing assistance, and other support services like fishery processing facilities and access to credit.

SEC. 110. ***Agriculture Production.*** – The Regional Government shall pursue the following strategies to develop and increase agricultural productivity.

- (a) Pursue a multidisciplinary research, development and extension activities to produce and promote technologies and invent machinery and facilities, that will



1 be used to improve productivity and product quality, reduce cost of production,  
2 enhance value-addition and improve processing, and enhance abilities to protect  
3 the environment and agricultural resources;

4 (b) Initiate, encourage and give highest priority support to small and medium  
5 agribusiness enterprises and industries with linkages to agriculture. It shall  
6 ensure the allocation of adequate public investments to establish adequate  
7 support-agricultural infrastructure and facilities to sustain such ventures;

8 (c) Formulate and implement product standards and regulatory rules that will ensure  
9 the production, processing, distribution and marketing of safe and globally-  
10 competitive products, and simultaneously promote environmental conservation;  
11 and

12 (d) Ensure that all sectors involved in the [production, processing and marketing of  
13 food and non- food products shall strictly adhere to appropriate existing laws and  
14 regulations on the proper utilization and disposal of synthetic and chemical  
15 inputs and materials, and industrial and toxic wastes. Relative to this, the  
16 Regional Government shall pursue and encourage organic methods of agriculture  
17 in a day.

18 SEC. 111. ***Prevent Flight of Labor and Capital.*** – To promote investments and  
19 employment and to prevent flight of capital and labor from the region, the Regional  
20 Government shall adopt measures:

21 (a) Against monopolies, cartels and unfair competition in public utilities,  
22 development, trading and similar concerns. It may, in the interest of regional  
23 welfare and security, establish and operate pioneering public utilities. Upon  
24 payment of just compensation, it may transfer the ownership of such utilities to  
25 cooperatives or other collective organizations; and

26 (b) To initiate, encourage and support industrialization in the region, taking into  
27 account the culture and capabilities of the people of the area to control or  
28 manage their resources, the ecological needs of the area and the protection,  
29 conservation and development of resources.  
30

31 SEC. 112. ***Eco-cultural Tourism.*** – Consistent with the preservation of cultural  
32 heritage and the protection of ecology, the Regional Government shall promote eco-  
33 cultural tourism in the region. Sites with historical, scientific, cultural significance  
34 including natural and man-made landmarks and scenic vistas shall likewise be  
35 preserved, maintained and protected.

SEC. 113. **Promote Economic Zones.** – The Regional Government shall encourage, promote and support the establishment and development of economic zones, industrial and trade centers, and airports, in strategic areas and growth centers in the region, including the necessary support infrastructure in accordance with land use and other environmental considerations.

SEC. 114. ***Marketing and Exportation of Indigenous Products.*** – The Regional Government shall, in coordination with local government units, encourage investments, development, marketing and exportation of indigenous and other local products in accordance with its development goals and priorities.

SEC. 115. ***Cooperatives.*** – The Regional Government shall promote cooperatives registered with the Cooperative Development Authority as tools for economic development, social justice, and people empowerment to initiate policies and develop mechanisms to enjoin the participation of the banking sector and financial institutions in the delivery of credit assistance for the establishment and building of rural enterprises and small-medium enterprises (SMEs).

## ARTICLE XII

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

## LANGUAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE AND SPORT

SEC. 116. ***Regional Educational Policies.*** – The Regional Government shall formulate educational policies to preserve, safeguard and develop cultural heritage guided by the following plans and programs:

- (a) The establishment of educational institutions, colleges and universities which shall enjoy fiscal and administrative autonomy but subject to regional laws. Existing educational institutions, colleges and universities shall continue to be governed by their respective charters;
- (b) The development of curricular programs relevant to the preservation and development of cultural heritage and responsive to the social, economic, political and moral needs of the Cordillerans;
- (c) The adoption and enactment of educational policies that shall recognize, support, develop and promote existing indigenous system of learning; and
- (d) The creation of Regional Educational Board that will supervise, govern and intervene in the establishment, adoption and implementation of educational



1 policies and programs of both formal and informal education for schools, colleges  
2 and universities in the region.

3 SEC. 117. ***Education with Highest Budget Allocation.*** – The Regional  
4 Government shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education.

5 SEC. 118. ***Exemption from Taxes and Duties.*** – Private educational institutions,  
6 colleges and universities shall enjoy the protection and support of the Regional  
7 Government. All revenues and assets of non-stock, non-profit educational institutions  
8 used actually, directly and exclusively for educational purposes shall be exempt from  
9 taxes and duties.

10 SEC. 119. ***Creation of Regional Scholarship Committee for Education.*** – The  
11 Regional Government shall assist the national government to provide free basic  
12 education and shall likewise endeavor to provide free tertiary education through  
13 scholarship programs, subsidies, research grants and other incentives to poor, gifted,  
14 and deserving individuals. Towards this end, there shall be created a Regional  
15 Scholarship Committee for Education.

16 SEC. 120. ***Rights of Teachers and Parents to Organize.*** – The right of teachers,  
17 employees, students and parents to organize themselves and to participate in school  
18 policy and decision-making shall be guaranteed.

19 SEC. 121. ***Culture Sensitive Education.*** – The educational system in the region  
20 shall develop a program, research, instruction and extension that will promote  
21 consciousness and appreciation of the ethnic identity of the people in the region and  
22 shall provide a better understanding of their cultural heritage for the attainment of  
23 national unity and harmony in all levels of education. It shall provide, promote, enhance  
24 or adopt a curriculum in all levels that includes Cordillera languages, customs and  
25 traditions and other indigenous knowledge systems and practices, as may be applicable.

26  
27 SEC. 122. ***State Colleges and Universities.*** – State colleges and universities in  
28 the region shall form part of the regional educational sub-system of the autonomous  
29 region and shall continue to enjoy fiscal and institutional autonomy, continue to be  
30 governed by their respective charters and enjoy support of the Regional Government.

31 (a) The Regional Government shall be represented in the board of regents or  
32 trustees in state universities and colleges in the region.

33 (b) The budget of state colleges and universities in the region while prepared  
34 separately shall form part the budget of the Regional Government when

presented to congress for approval. The state colleges and universities shall continue to receive funding from the national government while the Regional Government shall provide additional funding.

(c) The Regional Government shall capacitate state colleges and universities in order to provide assistance to regional development.

SEC. 123. **School Charters.** – Subject to the general supervision of the Regional Government, all schools with charters shall continue to be governed by their respective charters.

SEC. 124. **Priority on Indigenous and Appropriate Technology.** – The management of scientific and indigenous research and appropriate technology on all levels of education including research institutions shall be given priority by the Regional Government.

SEC. 125. **Intellectual Property Rights.** – Incentives and safeguards for intellectual property rights, and assistance in the registration of patents and copyrights shall be accorded to Cordillera artists, writers, scientists, researchers and inventors.

SEC. 126. **Medium of Instruction.** – The Regional Government shall retain English and Filipino as a medium of instruction in all levels of education. Consistent with its regional and cultural identity, and whenever possible, it shall adopt a system of multi-lingual or mother tongue-based approach in basic education to strengthen and enrich the various languages and dialects in the region as well as the national language as maybe appropriate.

SEC. 127. **Sports Development.** – The Regional Government shall design and implement sports development programs, and indigenous games and sports which shall be a cooperative responsibility of the school, the community, and the government.

SEC. 128. **Cultural Heritage Center.** – The Regional Government shall establish a Cordillera Commission for the Preservation and Promotion of Cultural Heritage to promote, research, document, coordinate with other groups and institutions and establish and maintain a data bank on all indigenous matters.

ARTICLE XIII

SOCIAL JUSTICE, HEALTH AND WELFARE



1        SEC. 129. **Measures on Social Protection.** – The Regional Government commits  
2        itself to social protection and shall adopt measures to:

- 3        (a) Empower and improve the quality of life of the poor, disadvantaged,  
4        marginalized, and vulnerable individuals, families, sectors and communities of  
5        the region;
- 6        (b) Reduce or eradicate poverty to ensure that all Cordillerans are free from all  
7        forms of deprivation, vulnerability, and abuse;
- 8        (c) Create equal opportunities for assistance and protection for all Cordillerans;
- 9        (d) Promote gender and development (GAD) through the creation, adoption and  
10       sustainability of programs and policies that are gender sensitive; and
- 11       (e) Enact measures and develop programs that will protect the people from any  
12       threat of violence and exploitation, eliminate trafficking in persons and mitigate  
13       pressures for involuntary migration and servitude of persons, not only to support  
14       trafficked persons but more importantly, to ensure their recovery, rehabilitation  
15       and reintegration into the mainstream of society.

16       SEC. 130. **Equality of Employment Opportunities.** – The Regional Government  
17       shall undertake steps to protect the labor sector and promote equality of employment  
18       opportunities for all. Towards this end, it shall provide for:

- 19       (a) Participation of the Regional Government in the regional wage board in working  
20       out periodic adjustments and rational standardization of compensation rates to  
21       ensure a sustainable and decent wage for all workers;
- 22       (b) Profit sharing schemes that recognize the right of workers to a just share in the  
23       profits of businesses, provide incentives thereof, and the right of the enterprise  
24       to reasonable returns on investments;
- 25       (c) Protection of workers against unhealthy and unsafe working conditions; and
- 26       (d) Mandatory corporate social responsibility towards employees and host  
27       community.

29       SEC. 131. **Hiring of Qualified Cordillerans.** – The Regional Government shall  
30       promote the hiring of qualified Cordillerans in government projects and private  
31       businesses located in the autonomous region.

32       SEC. 132. **Health as Basic Human Right.** – The Regional Government recognizes  
33       health as a basic human right and the attainment, maintenance and protection thereof  
34       shall be its responsibility. It affirms health as an instrument for and a product of socio-  
35       economic development. For this purpose, it shall, among other things:

- (a) Establish, maintain, and support an effective health care delivery system utilizing primary health care as a comprehensive and integrated approach;
- (b) Ensure that the health care system is governed by the principles of service, social justice and equity;
- (c) Promote health knowledge and skills that will enable its people to take responsibility for their health;
- (d) Give relevant training and appropriate standards for health workers and professionals;
- (e) Establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system which shall provide for the adoption of an essential drug list, encourage the use of generic medicines or drugs, and promote the use of herbal medicines and indigenous health resources;
- (f) Conduct research on traditional healing methods and promote indigenous health care practices;
- (g) Evolve financing schemes to effectively lessen the costs of health care without sacrificing the quality of health care services; and
- (h) Prioritize health by allocating at least 5% of the Regional Annual Budget to form the base of health budget.

SEC. 133. **Rights of Workers.** – The Regional Government shall, in consonance with the Constitution, guarantee the rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including those provided by law.

SEC. 134. **Rights of Vulnerable Sectors.** – The Regional Government shall:

- (a) Promote the well-being of differently-abled persons, the mentally handicapped, the elderly, the homeless, widowed and orphans, retirees, and veterans, adult offenders and children in conflict with the law and victims; and
- (b) Assist victims of calamities, abused and depressed children and women in crisis situations, including victims of adult offenders and children in conflict with the law.

SEC. 135. **Program for Rebel Returnees.** – The Regional Government shall adopt a social integration program responsive to the needs of rebel returnees including adult offenders and children in conflict with the law.

SEC. 136. **Social and Insurance Measures.** – The Regional Government shall adopt insurance and social security measures responsive to the needs of its people to supplement existing privileges.



SEC. 137. ***Housing Programs.*** – The Regional Government, in cooperation with the private sector, shall promote housing programs where needed, which shall be financed under liberal credit terms and shall utilize indigenous materials, architecture and technology. Participation of housing cooperatives to administer the projects shall be encouraged.

SEC. 138. ***Role of Cordilleran Women.*** – The Regional Government shall recognize and strengthen the role of the Cordillera women in nation-building. It shall ensure the full implementation of the Magna Carta of Women and all other existing laws that promote the welfare and protection of women.

SEC. 139. ***Comprehensive Program on Youth.*** – The Regional Government shall establish a comprehensive program on youth development, create the structures to implement the same and appropriate adequate funds to provide support for the program.

SEC. 140. ***Support to Peoples' Organization.*** – The Regional Government shall promote and support duly established peoples' organizations and encourage the formation of organizations, especially those of the underprivileged.

## ARTICLE XIV

## PEACE AND ORDER

SEC. 141. ***Prohibition on Private Armies.*** – The Regional Government shall promote and maintain peace and order and public safety in the region. It shall not allow private armies.

SEC. 142. ***Defense of the Region.*** – The defense and security of the autonomous region shall be the responsibility of the national government with due recognition to recommendations from the Regional Government.

SEC. 143. ***Peace Keeping Programs.*** – The Regional Government shall have co-management over peace-keeping programs and initiatives and undertake close coordination with the Philippine National Police as well as the Armed Forces of the Philippines and other National Law Enforcement Agencies.

SEC. 144. **Regional Emergency.** – The provisions of the preceding sections notwithstanding, the Regional Governor may request the President of the Philippines to call upon the Armed Forces of the Philippines:

- 1 (a) To prevent or suppress lawlessness, violence, invasion or rebellion, when the  
2 public safety so requires, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;  
3 (b) To suppress the danger to or breach of peace in the autonomous region, when  
4 the police forces of the autonomous region are not able to do so; and  
5 (c) To avert any imminent danger to public order and security in the autonomous  
6 region.

7 SEC. 145. **Traditional Conflict Resolution.** – The Regional Government shall  
8 strengthen and enhance indigenous institutions or systems as may be applicable and  
9 found to be acceptable and effective in the promotion of social, political, economic and  
10 peace and order in the region. It shall provide for a system of incorporating indigenous  
11 practices in conflict resolution wherever and whenever applicable.

12  
13 **ARTICLE XV**

14 **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

15 SEC. 146. **Text of the Organic Act.** – This Organic Act shall be officially  
16 promulgated in Filipino and English and translated into the languages widely spoken in  
17 the autonomous region. In case of conflict, the English text shall prevail.

18 SEC. 147. **Change of Name.** – The Regional Assembly may adopt a new name for  
19 the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera after public consultation.

20 SEC. 148 **Regional Symbol.** – The Regional Government shall have a regional flag,  
21 emblem and hymn.

22  
23  
24 **ARTICLE XVI**

25 **PERSONAL, FAMILY, INDIGENOUS AND PROPERTY RELATIONS**

26 SEC. 149. **Customary Laws.** – Customary laws affecting personal, family, tribal  
27 and property relations in the Cordillera shall be recognized.

28 SEC. 150. **Protection of the Family.** – The family as the basic unit of society shall  
29 be protected.

30 SEC. 151. **Indigenous Marriages.** – Marriages solemnized in accordance with the  
31 indigenous customary laws of the place shall be valid, and the dissolution of such  
32 marriages in accordance with these laws shall be recognized.



SEC. 152. ***Indigenous Settlement of Disputes.*** – Settlement of tribal, personal and family disputes shall be recognized. Acquisition and encumbrance of property done in accordance with customary practices, and settlement of disputes involving property rights and ownership shall be governed by the customary laws of the place where the property is located.

## ARTICLE XVII

## AMENDMENTS OR REVISIONS

SEC. 153. ***Amendment or Revision.*** – Any amendment to, or revision of this Act may be made by Congress upon recommendation of the majority of all members of the Regional Assembly.

SEC. 154. ***Effectivity of Amendment or Revision.*** – Any amendment to or revision of this Organic Act shall become effective when ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite called for the purpose which shall be held not earlier than sixty (60) days nor later than ninety (90) days after the approval of such amendment or revisions.

## ARTICLE XVIII

## TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

SEC. 155. **Coverage of the Plebiscite.** – The coverage of the plebiscite shall be the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and the chartered City of Baguio. Any two or more provinces or cities voting favorably for this Organic Act in the plebiscite shall comprise the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera while those voting unfavorably for this Organic Act in the plebiscite shall remain within their current region.

SEC. 156. ***Election Date.*** – Unless otherwise provided by law, the date of election of the first set of officials of the Regional Government shall be in the next local election following the ratification of this Organic Act in the plebiscite. Subsequent elections shall coincide with the nationwide local elections.

SEC. 157. **Residency Requirement for the First Election.** – For purposes of the first regional election, candidates must have actually resided and a registered voter in the region for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the election. Provided that

1 they meet all other qualifications and none of the disqualifications under Article V of this  
2 Organic Act.

3 SEC. 158. **Cessation of Administrative Offices.** – Except for the regional line  
4 agencies, the Cordillera Executive Board, the Cordillera Regional Assembly, and the  
5 Cordillera Bodong Administration as a commission, created under Executive Order No.  
6 220, and the Cordillera Regional Development Council created by Executive Order No.  
7 30 after the de-activation of the above-mentioned Cordillera bodies, shall cease to exist  
8 immediately upon the assumption of office of the Regional Governor.

9 SEC. 159. **Seat of the Regional Government.** – The seat of the Regional  
10 Government shall be determined by the majority of all members of the Regional  
11 Assembly: Provided, however, that the interim seat of the Regional Government shall  
12 be in the City of Baguio.

13 SEC. 160. **Oversight Committee.** – Within one (1) month from the  
14 organization of the Regional Government, an Oversight Committee composed of the  
15 executive secretary as Chairperson, the secretary of the Department of Budget and  
16 Management, the Cordillera Regional Governor, the Regional Speaker of the Assembly,  
17 the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Chairperson  
18 of NCIP as members, shall be organized for the purpose of supervising the transfer to  
19 the autonomous region of such powers and functions vested in it by this Organic Act  
20 and the appropriations of the offices or agencies including the transfer of properties,  
21 assets and liabilities, and all personnel of the line agencies and government-owned or –  
22 controlled corporations that may be absorbed by the Regional Government and, with  
23 respect to the latter, also the terms and conditions of their turnover, without diminution  
24 of their compensation and other benefits. Provided, the salaries of these absorbed  
25 personnel shall continue to be funded by the national government.

26  
27 Within six (6) months after its organization, the oversight committee shall submit  
28 its report and recommendation to the President of the Philippines who shall act on the  
29 report and recommendations within ninety (90) days after receipt thereof: Provided,  
30 however, that if the President fails to act within said period, the recommendations of  
31 the Oversight Committee shall be deemed approved.

32 SEC. 161. **Government Allocations.** – Over and above the regularly given to  
33 Local Government Units and regional line agencies, the national government shall  
34 continue its annual allotment to the Regional Government. In addition, the national



government shall provide the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera an annual assistance of Ten billion pesos (P10,000,000,000.00) for the first five (5) years and Five billion pesos (P5,000,000,000.00) for the next five (5) years to be allocated in the following manner:

(a) Ninety percent (90%) of the annual subsidy for the Regional Government shall be invested exclusively for revenue generating projects.

(b) Ten percent (10%) of the annual subsidy shall remain with the Regional Government as Trust Fund.

SEC. 162. Fifty percent of the revenues generated mentioned in Sec. 160 (a) shall be re-invested for income generating projects. The remaining revenues generated shall be distributed as follows:

(a) Fifteen percent (15%) to the Regional Government;

(b) Thirty five percent (35%) to the Province/ highly urbanized city;

SEC. 163. **Disclosure and Transparency.** – Funds shall be available exclusively for the specific purpose for which they have been appropriated. Any officer of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera whose duty permits or requires the possession, custody and disbursement of the funds shall be accountable and responsible thereof. Financial records shall be kept, audited and made public annually or as often as maybe necessary.

SEC. 164. **Direct Release of LGUs Share.** – The share of each local government unit shall be released without need of any further action, directly to the provincial, city, municipal or barangay treasurer, as the case may be on a quarterly basis within five (5) days after the end of each quarter, and which shall not be subject to any lien or hold back that may be imposed by the Regional Government for whatever purpose.

SEC. 165. **Plebiscite.** – The creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera shall take effect when approved by a majority of the votes cast by the constituent units provided in Section 3, Article II of this Act, in a plebiscite which shall be held not earlier than three (3) months but not later than six (6) months after this Act takes effect: Provided, that only the provinces and cities voting favorably in such plebiscite shall be included in the ARC.

The sum of Two billion six hundred ninety-five million (P2,695,000,000) is hereby appropriated for the following purposes:

1 (a) Twenty million pesos (PhP20,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Regional  
2 Development Council for the conduct of a well-coordinated inter-sectoral and  
3 inter-agency Regional, Provincial, Municipal and Barangay information campaign  
4 on this Act.

5 (b) Seventy million pesos (PhP70,000,000.00) shall be equitably divided among the  
6 provinces and the city for the conduct of IEC purposes.

7 (c) Twenty-Five million pesos (PhP25,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Commission  
8 on Elections.

9 (d) Eighty million pesos (PhP80,000,000.00) to be allotted to the Regional  
10 Government for its initial organizational requirements.

11 (e) Two billion five hundred million (P2,500,000,000) for the construction of the  
12 regional government center.  
13

14 Par (a) and (b) shall be released upon the effectivity of this Organic Act.

15 The Cordillera Development Council with the assistance of the Philippine Information  
16 Agency, and in consultation with the provincial/city governments, the Cordillera  
17 Association of Regional Executives, and other key stakeholders, shall determine the  
18 manner of campaigning and the deputation of government agencies, non-government  
19 organizations and other stakeholders for purposes of conducting a well-coordinated  
20 information campaign within the first three months after the passage of this Act.

21 The amount of Two billion six hundred ninety-five million (P2,695,000,000) as herein  
22 appropriated shall be charged against the contingent fund. Any deficiency thereof shall  
23 be taken from any available funds of the national government.  
24

25 SEC. 166. **Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part of this Organic Act is  
26 declared as invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining part or parts thereof not affected  
27 thereby shall remain valid.

28 SEC. 167. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws inconsistent with this Organic Act are  
29 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

30 SEC. 168. **Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following  
31 its complete publication in the official gazette and in at least two (2) newspapers of  
32 nationwide circulation.

33 *Approved,*