

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

10 AUG - 2010

SENATE

S.B. NO. 2349

RECEIVED BY

Introduced by SENATOR FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.

Explanatory Note

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) was created by law in 1963 primarily to address the needs of the "Irrigation Age", and specifically to, "investigate and study all available and possible water resources in the Philippines, primarily for irrigation purposes; to plan, design, construct and/or improve all types of irrigation projects and appurtenant structures" (**Section 2, R.A. 3601, as amended by P.D. 552 and P.D. 1702**). For this purpose, the NIA has been given the necessary flexibility of a corporate vehicle and the administrative autonomy to pursue its statutory objectives.

Based on its 2010 First Quarter Progress Report to the President, the NIA reported that in regard the status of irrigation development in the country, "as of December 31, 2009, the total service area developed was 1,539,937 ha or 49% of the estimated potential irrigable area of 3,126,340 ha. x x x. The remaining potential area to be developed is still 1,586,960 ha. x x x."

According to the NIA itself, its current success rate is forty-nine (49%), or less than half of the country's potential. While according to experts, the country's self-sufficiency in agriculture will be achieved if we can irrigate ninety-five percent (95%) of irrigable areas.

This congressional initiative comes in the face of a dwindling outlook in the country's agricultural output, the increase of which is the ultimate objective of government's irrigation programs. In fact, according to the situationer as of May 2010 provided by the Department of Agriculture (DA) in its website:

Production in the crops subsector dropped by 6.15 percent this quarter. The subsector shared 47.75 percent in total agricultural output. The output gains recorded by coconut, tobacco, cassava, onion and mango did not offset the huge production losses in palay at 11.41 percent and corn at 16.76 percent. There were also big cuts in the production of sugarcane, mongo and rubber. The subsector grossed P170.5 billion at current prices or 0.36 percent lower compared to previous year's level.

In regard palay and corn production, the DA continued:

Palay

The January-June 2010 palay production may decrease by 10.5%; from 7.38 million mt in 2009, production may drop to 6.60 million mt. This is largely attributed to the production losses resulting from the El Niño phenomenon in the 1st and 2nd quarters of the year. Area harvested may contract by 6.6% or 128 thousand hectares. From last year's record of 1.95 million hectares, area harvested is likely to go down to 1.82 million hectares. Yield may drop by 4.2% in the first half of 2010. From 3.79 mt per hectare in 2009, yield is expected to go down to 3.63 mt per hectare.

This year's January-March palay output was 3.49 million mt, 11.4% lower than last year's 3.94 million mt. The major sources of the decline were the production losses incurred in Cagayan Valley, Western Visayas, SOCCSKSARGEN and Northern Mindanao. The volume of losses in these regions summed up to 421 thousand mt or 93.6% of the total production loss in the country during the quarter. Heavily affected by El Niño was Cagayan Valley where 182 thousand mt of palay were lost during the first quarter of 2010. This was 40.6% of the country's total production loss.

Corn

The January-June 2010 corn production is expected to drop by 24.8%, from 3.22 million mt last year to 2.42 million mt this year. Area harvested may decrease by 15.0%. From 1.13 million hectares in 2009, area harvested may go down to 0.96 million hectares. Yield is likewise expected to drop by 11.5%. The adverse effects of the El Niño phenomenon in major corn producing areas such as Cagayan Valley, SOCCSKSARGEN, Western Visayas, CAR and Northern Mindanao may bring about these reductions in production, area harvested and yield in the first half of 2010.

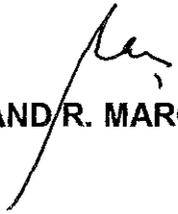
The January-March corn output was recorded at 1.60 million mt, 16.8% down from the 1.92 million mt produced in the same quarter of 2009. Only Ilocos and Davao Regions registered production gains. Cagayan Valley, SOCCSKSARGEN, Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao and CAR incurred production losses of 280 thousand mt or 87% of the total production loss of the country for the period. Cagayan Valley was the biggest loser with 140 thousand mt of production losses due to El Niño. **(Department of Agriculture website)**

After almost fifty (50) years of existence, there is still much more to be achieved in the attainment of the yearly targets and actual accomplishments of the NIA. Thus, on reaching the NIA's half-century of its existence, there is a need for the Legislature to study the efficiency and possibly reassess the capabilities and worthiness of the NIA in the agricultural sector and bureaucratic structure in general.

Under existing law, NIA is obliged to only directly furnish a fiscal report to the Legislature and not a report of its operations and accomplishments. Thus, there is a need to require the NIA to directly furnish the House of Representatives and the Senate a detailed status report of its programs, accomplishments and failed targets for a period of five (5) years, to enable the Congress to determine its efficiency rate.

This bill proposes to accelerate irrigation development in the country in order to address the pressing agricultural needs of our countrymen. It mandates the National Irrigation Authority to come up programs and plans of action to achieve this goal, within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act.

In view of thereof, the passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

OFFICE

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SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 2349

RECEIVED

Introduced by Senator FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.

**AN ACT MANDATING THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION (NIA)
TO ACCELERATE NATIONAL IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as "The National Irrigation
Program of 2010."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to pursue
a comprehensive agricultural development, through effective and progressive
irrigation programs. Guided by the principle of self-sufficiency, the agricultural
sector shall make full use of human and natural resources in order to attain
greater productivity of all irrigable lands in the country.

SECTION 3. National Irrigation Program. The National Government shall
undertake a comprehensive irrigation program, guided by the following
objectives:

1. Generation, restoration and rehabilitation of the irrigation systems and
facilities using progressive and modern irrigation methods;
2. Reformulation and upgrading of the irrigation method through
continued research and development and application of technological
advancements in the field of irrigation;
3. Acceleration of agricultural production through an improved irrigation
methods;
4. Strengthened coordination with local government units, cooperatives,
farmers' associations, non-governmental organizations, and technical
assistance and development of the irrigation systems used in their
respective areas and jurisdictions.

SECTION 4. Expediting of Irrigation Development Programs. - In line with
the national policy objectives, the NIA is mandated to expedite its irrigation
development programs and be able to irrigate ninety-five percent (95%) of
irrigable lands all over the country, within a period of three (3) years from the
effectivity of this Act. After the lapse of the three-year period, the NIA shall then
submit to Congress a detailed report and satisfactory proof of its completion of
the ninety-five-percent target.

SECTION 5. Continuing Research and Development. The NIA shall conduct continuing research and development as well as application of technological advancements in the field of irrigation.

SECTION 6. Technical Assistance to Local Government Units, Cooperatives, Farmers' Associations, Non-governmental Organizations. The NIA shall provide technical and financial assistance to local government units, cooperatives, farmers' associations, and non-governmental organizations with respect to irrigation systems located, utilized, and managed in their respective jurisdictions.

SECTION 7. Submission of Detailed Status Report to Congress. - The NIA is hereby mandated to furnish Congress a detailed status report of its programs, targets and accomplishments for the preceding five (5) years. This is without prejudice to the NIA's obligation to furnish Congress with a Fiscal Report under Article VI, Section 11 of R.A. 3601.

SECTION 8. Funding and Appropriation. - The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the NIA. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the succeeding General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause. - The provisions of this Act are hereby declared to be separable and if any clause, sentence, provision or section of this Act, for any reason, be held invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions or application of this Act which can be given force and effect.

SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, charters, executive orders, administrative orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof insofar as they are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,