



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE
KEY POINTS OF PLENARY PROCEEDINGS
Second Regular Session, 19th Congress

Session No. 18
Tuesday, 5 September 2023

1. Senate Bill No. 2243 under Committee Report No. 85

An Act Strengthening and Revitalizing the Salt Industry in the Philippines, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and For Other Purposes

Sponsor: Sen. Cynthia A. Villar

Amendments of Senator Villar (C)

Senator Villar (C) proposed, and the Body approved, the following amendments:

- On Section 3, page 2, delete lines 4 to 7, starting with the word “refers,” and replace it with the following: PRODUCER REFERS TO ONE WHO UTILIZES TRADITIONAL METHODS OF PRODUCTION USING NON-MECHANIZED MEANS;
- On the same page, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:
SALT REFERS TO UNREFINED SALT, DERIVED DIRECTLY FROM A LIVING SEA OR OCEAN HARVESTED THROUGH THE PROCESS OF COOKING, SMOKING OR SOLAR EVAPORATION. REGARDLESS OF THE MANNER OF PRODUCTION, IT RETAINS NATURAL TRACES OF MINERALS COMING FROM SEA WATER.
- On Section 3, page 2, delete lines 15 to 22 and replace with the following:

I. INDIVIDUAL SALT FARM – SALT FARM OF NOT MORE THAN FIFTY (50) HECTARES;

II. CORPORATE OR COOPERATIVE/ASSOCIATION SALT FARM – SALT FARM OF NOT MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED FIFTY (250) HECTARES.
- On Section 6, page 5, between lines 5 and 6, to insert the following:

(D) IMPLEMENT THE MECHANIZATION OF SALT PRODUCTION PROCESS THROUGH PROVISION OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS BUT NOT LIMITED TO HARVESTERS, MOTORIZED PUMPS TO REDUCE OPERATIONAL COSTS; and reletter the succeeding subparagraphs;

- On section 11, after the word “Act,” add another proviso which reads;

PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT THE BFAR SHALL MAINTAIN A DIGITAL DATABASE OF ALL APPLICANTS AND HOLDERS OF SPTI TO ENSURE INTEGRITY OF DATA, STRONGER DATA PROTECTION AND CONVENIENT DATA ACCESS;

- On the same section, delete lines 24 to 25 and replace with the following:

INDIVIDUALS MAY LEASE UP TO FIFTY (50) HECTARES OF SALT FARMS, CORPORATIONS OR COOPERATIVES/ASSOCIATIONS MAY LEASE UP TO TWO HUNDRED FIFTY (250) HECTARES

- On Section 13, Senator Villar (C) proposed, and the Body approved, subject to style, to delete lines 16 to 18 and to replace with the following:

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION:

EXISTING COOPERATIVES AND ASSOCIATIONS

1. CERTIFICATION AS EXISTING SALT PRODUCER FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT WHERE SALT FARM OPERATES;
2. CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION FROM CDA FOR COOPERATIVES, OR FROM THE LGU WHERE THE FARM SITE IS LOCATED FOR FARMERS' ASSOCIATION;
3. PRODUCTION RECORD FOR THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING YEAR; AND
4. AFFIDAVIT FROM APPLICANT OF EXISTENCE OF AT LEAST FIFTY (50) MEMBERS.

NEW REGISTRANT COOPERATIVES AND ASSOCIATIONS

1. CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION FROM CDA FOR COOPERATIVES, OR FROM LGU WHERE THE PROPOSED SITE IS LOCATED FOR FARMERS' ASSOCIATION;
2. BUSINESS PLAN;
3. FARM SITE INSPECTION REPORT FROM THE PROVINCIAL FISHERIES OFFICER (PFO); AND
4. AFFIDAVIT FROM APPLICANT OF EXISTENCE OF AT LEAST FIFTY (50) MEMBERS.

EXISTING CORPORATION

1. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC) REGISTRATION;
2. CERTIFICATION AS EXISTING SALT PRODUCER FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT WHERE SALT FARM OPERATES;
3. UPDATED TAX PAYMENT RECORD; AND
4. PROOF OF SSS, PAG-IBIG, PHILIHEALTH REMITTANCES.

NEW CORPORATION REGISTRANT

1. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC) REGISTRATION;
2. BUSINESS PLAN; AND
3. FARM SITE INSPECTION REPORT FROM THE PROVINCIAL FISHERIES OFFICER (PFO).

EXISTING INDIVIDUAL AND ARTISANAL

- A. CERTIFICATE AS A SALT PRODUCER FROM THE LGU, AND INDICATION AS ARTISANAL, IF APPLICABLE; AND
- B. PRODUCTION REPORT FOR THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING YEAR

NEW INDIVIDUAL OR ARTISANAL REGISTRANT

- A. BUSINESS PLAN; AND
- B. FARM /PRODUCTION SITE INSPECTION REPORT FROM THE PROVINCIAL FISHERIES OFFICER (PFO).

REGISTRATION SHALL BE RENEWED EVERY THREE (3) YEARS.

- On Section 28, as further amended by Senate President Zubiri, to delete line 2 starting from the word “account” to line 22, and replace with the following:

SPECIAL ACCOUNT WITH THE NATIONAL TREASURY. THE SIDCEF SHALL EXIST FOR THE NEXT TEN (10) YEARS FOLLOWING THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT.

THE ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION OF THE SIDCEF SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:

A) THE SIDCEF SHALL BE EARMARKED, RELEASED, AND IMPLEMENTED AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) PROVISION OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING SEA WATER PUMPS, SALT GRADERS, SALT HARVESTERS, DUMP TRUCKS AND BAGGING MACHINES, AND SALT IODIZATION MACHINE FOR BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE INTO SALT IODIZATION; FIFTY PERCENT (50%); TO BE UTILIZED AND IMPLEMENTED BY BFAR;
- 2) ESTABLISHMENT OF SALT FARM WAREHOUSES/STORAGE AREAS; FORTY PERCENT (40%); TO BE UTILIZED AND IMPLEMENTED BY DPWH;
- 3) CONDUCT OF EXTENSION SERVICES; FIVE PERCENT (5%), TO BE UTILIZED AND IMPLEMENTED BY BFAR PROVINCIAL OFFICES; AND
- 4) DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SALT PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY; FIVE PERCENT (5%); TO BE UTILIZED AND IMPLEMENTED BY NFRDI.

PROVIDED, THAT THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE SIDCEF ARE THE SALT COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION OF SUBSISTENCE AND SMALL FISHERFOLK;

PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE EARMARKING PERCENTAGE SHALL BE REVIEWED AT THE END OF THE FIFTH (5TH) YEAR FOLLOWING THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, FOR POSSIBLE REVISIONS AND UPGRADING BASED ON CHANGES IN INTERVENTION PRIORITIES:

PROVIDED FURTHERMORE, THAT THE ALLOCATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS SHALL FOCUS ON THE PROVINCES THAT HAVE THE MOST NUMBER OF SALT FARMS FOR THE FIRST FIVE (5) YEARS UPON EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, WHICH SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED EQUALLY AMONG EXISTING AND NEWLY ESTABLISHED SALT FARMS.

B) AT THE END OF THE TENTH (10TH) YEAR UPON THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, A MANDATORY REVIEW SHALL BE CONDUCTED BY THE CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION (COCAF) TO DETERMINE WHETHER SIDCEF AND ITS USE IS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE CONTINUED, AMENDED, OR TERMINATED. THE COCAF SHALL UTILIZE THE INCREASE OR DECREASE IN FARMERS' INCOMES AS A PRIMARY BENCHMARK IN DETERMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERVENTIONS UNDER THE SIDCEF AND ITS POSSIBLE EXTENSION.

Amendments of Senator Villanueva

- On page 2, lines 23 to 24, after the word "salt" and the period (.), Senator Villanueva proposed, and the Body approved, the insertion of the following:

LOCAL SALT PRODUCERS SHALL BE CATEGORIZED AS FOLLOWS:

1. SUBSISTENCE, PRODUCER/MANUFACTURER – A PERSON OR ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION, TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SALT NOT EXCEEDING TWO METRIC TONS (2 MT) PER YEAR;
2. SMALL PRODUCER/MANUFACTURER – A PERSON, CORPORATION OR ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION, TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SALT RANGING FROM MORE THAN TWO METRIC TONS (2 MT) TO THREE HUNDRED METRIC TONS (300 MT) PER YEAR;
3. MEDIUM PRODUCER/MANUFACTURER – A PERSON, CORPORATION OR ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION, TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SALT RANGING FROM MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED METRIC TONS (300 MT) TO TWO THOUSAND METRIC TONS (2000 MT) PER YEAR;
4. LARGE PRODUCER/MANUFACTURER – A PERSON, CORPORATION OR ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION, TRADE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SALT EXCEEDING TWO THOUSAND METRIC TONS (2000) PER YEAR.

- On page 12, Senator Villanueva proposed, and the Body approved, subject to style, to amend Section 17, to read as follows:

SEC.17. THE BFAR, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DTI, DOST, DOLE, TESDA, AND OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, SHALL PROVIDE COMPLEMENTARY TRAINING PROGRAMS THAT SHALL DEVELOP AND UPGRADE THE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF PHILIPPINE SALT PRODUCERS, ENSURE PRODUCT RAISEABILITY AND COMPLIANCE TO FOOD SAFETY, HASTEN TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION, INCLUDING PRODUCT LABELING AND PACKAGING, ENHANCED SKILLS ON MARKET POSITIONING FOR PHILIPPINE ARTISANAL, SPECIALTY AND INDUSTRIAL SALTS AND SUCH OTHER CAPABILITIES NECESSARY IN THE MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL SALT INDUSTRY.

Amendments of Senator Cayetano (P)

- On page 2, line 8, Senator Cayetano (P) proposed, and the Body approved, to adopt the DOH definition of iodized salt which reads: ORDINARY SALT WITH FORTIFICANT POTASSIUM IODATE (K1O3)
- On page 10, line 16, after the acronym “BFAR,” Senator Cayetano (P) proposed, and the Body approved, the insertion of the phrase PROVIDED, THAT THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) SHALL RETAIN ITS JURISDICTION OVER THE REGISTRATION OF SALT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AS PROVIDED UNDER THE ASIN LAW AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10611 OR THE FOOD SAFETY ACT OF 2013.

Joint Amendments of Senators Hontiveros and Cayetano

- On section 25, to remove the phrase “salt iodization for food grade salt” and replace it with the phrase IODIZATION OF SALT THAT IS NOT INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AND FOOD PRODUCTION; and
- Add a new last sentence to Section 25, which reads: IMPORTERS, TRADERS AND DISTRIBUTORS OF IMPORTED FOOD GRADE SALT THAT WILL UNDERTAKE FORTIFICATION SHALL COMPLY WITH THE IODIZATION STANDARDS SET BY THE DOH.

2. Proposed Senate Resolution No. 711

Resolution Commending and Congratulating the Filipino Keglers For Winning Gold Medals in the 21st Asian Youth Tenpin Bowling Championships Held at the Blu-O Rhythm & Bowl in Bangkok, Thailand

Sponsorship Speech of Senator Go

Senator Go commended the Philippine bowlers' team for winning the overall championship for the first time. The Senator stated that the team achieved an extraordinary feat as they emerged victorious by capturing the overall title for the first time and winning two gold medals.

Special mention was made to Artegal Barrientos, who won the gold medal in the boys' master division, also for winning the championship title in the boys' division; Zach Ramin; Stephen Luke Diwa; Marc Dylan Custodio; and Artegal Barrientos. The Senator also expressed gratitude to the coaches, mentors, and the entire support staff who played an instrumental role in molding outstanding athletes.

In closing, he assured everyone that he will continue to pursue sports development programs and initiatives that will promote the welfare of Filipino athletes further to elevate the country's status in the sporting world.

Adopted, subject to style—Resolution No. 87

Motion of Senator Villanueva that all members be made coauthors of the resolution

3. Privilege Speech of Senator Padilla

Senator Padilla stood to call the Body's attention to another case of mistaken identity. This time, a 62-year-old Muslim, Mohammad Maca-Antal Said, was arrested by the NBI agents from NAIA Terminal 3 while he was about to leave for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on August 10, 2023.

The Senator stated that the arrest was made because the authorities from the Bureau of Immigration mistook the identity of Mohammad Maca-Antal Said for that of Mohammad Said, a.k.a. Ama Maas, who had nine warrants of arrest.

Senator Padilla underscored the following facts:

- 1) Mohammad Maca-Antal Said does not look like Mohammad Said, a.k.a.; the former is a 62-year-old, while the latter looked younger in his photo.
- 2) Tatay Mohammad was in Saudi Arabia from 2001 to October 2011 and could not have been in the Philippines when Mohammad Said committed the crimes in July 2011.
- 3) A newspaper article stated that Mohammad Said died in 2016 during a military operation in Sulu.
- 4) Mohammad Maca-Antal Said was granted a "no derogatory record" clearance by the National Bureau of Investigation.

He likewise mentioned that the victim is still being held at the New Bilibid Prison's temporary detention facility.

Senator Padilla noted that there are still loopholes in the information-sharing of government agencies and asked if there is an existing technology and infrastructure for a harmonized, integrated, and interconnected system. He explained that there is a need to look into policies implemented by the country's law enforcement agencies on accurately sharing critical information in apprehending criminals.

Manifestation of Senator Pimentel

The Minority Leader stated that he was alarmed with the incident narrated by Senator Padilla in his speech. He opined that a warrant of arrest should contain not just a first name and surname. There should be middle name or initial or sometimes an alias. He hoped that the law enforcers took into account such details in the warrant of arrest when they were convincing themselves that they were arresting the correct person subject of the warrant of arrest.

He stated that in other countries, the detention does not exceed 30 days in case of the law enforcers mistook and arrested the wrong person. He underscored the need to check what has been reported with the Bureau of Immigration and if such was close to the details in the passport of Tatay Mohammad.

He then requested for the referral of the speech to the proper committee to examine the information-sharing, the informations shared, and how lacking is the information shared to the BI. He also would want to discuss in the hearing the possibility of modernizing the BI.

Manifestation of Senator Hontiveros

Senator Hontiveros stated the law enforcers' use of "mistaken identity," especially when there is discrimination as in the case of Tatay Mohammad who has been in detention for one month and in the case Jemboy Baltazar, should long been stopped.

She noted that regulatory agencies like BI and law enforceent agencies like PNP must review the policies they implement and their manner of implementing such polies to stop the abuse of human rights in the guise of "mistaken identity."

Manifestation of Senator Tolentino

Senator Tolentino associated himself with Senator Padilla's speech and stated that during the budget briefing with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, he found out that the IACAT is not totally the handle of the BI, but it is the former that has a vital role to play such that they are supposed to be the ADVOCOM. Under their mandate, they were supposed to inform the travelers ahead of their initial contact with the Bureau of Immigration.

Manifestation of Senator Villanueva

Senator Villanueva expressed his gratitude and manifested his support for Senator Padilla's call for the Senate to look into such a concerning issue, as he revealed that thrice, he underwent the same harrowing experience in the United

States of America, including one when he took a domestic flight there, although not as grave as the one experienced by Tatay Mohammad.

He recalled that when he was still a member of the House of Representatives, it took him a year to undergo checks and protocols to clear himself because there was one person bearing the same name as his who had a murder case on his record.

Motion of Senator Villanueva to refer the privilege speech of Senator Padilla to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

4. Senate Bill No. 2426 under Committee Report No. 107

An Act Mandating the Formulation, Funding, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation of a Comprehensive And Multi-Year “Tatak Pinoy” (Proudly Filipino) Strategy, Establishing a Tatak Pinoy Council, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes

Sponsor: Sen. Sonny Angara

Interpellation of Senator Pimentel

Preliminarily, the Minority Leader asked if his understanding was correct that Tatak Pinoy is either an initiative or a strategy that the government will adopt through a council. The Sponsor replied in the affirmative and said that the Committee has no intent yet to patent or give the Tatak Pinoy a legal independent existence. He further explained that Tatak Pinoy is a strategy to elicit national pride and put it throughout the bureaucracy.

On how the Tatak Pinoy Council makes good use of the concept of “economic complexity,” Senator Angara said that the Council should ensure that all agencies, especially those with the biggest budgets in procurement alone, prioritize the purchase of Philippine industries and products.

Asked if the Committee envisioned Tatak Pinoy Council to be like the Creative Development Council, where there is a creative plan and a budget to be lent out, Senator Angara said that there are many possible interventions that the Council could do, including access to credit and to the market, which the DTI already does. Still, the latter needs the power to create or fund major infrastructure. Thus, the Council can recommend the funding of a major infrastructure so that the government can fund it upon receipt of the Council’s recommendation.

On whether there are no overlaps with the existing councils, think tanks, or bodies, the Sponsor replied that there would be an overlap with the innovation Council because some of the ways complexity is achieved are definitely through research and development, and innovation. He, however, emphasized the need for the councils to discuss their policy objectives so that there would be no replication and they would not be moving in separate directions. He also underscored the need for a standard so that the Council will not be arbitrary in the selection.

On the possibility of amending the bill to make the Executive Secretary or the President the head of the Council, Senator Pimentel opined that other agencies would respect a secretary as the chairperson of the Council. Senator Angara also explained that the Council is necessary since existing councils are stakeholders-

specific and no specific council focuses on producing and enhancing Philippine products. Thereupon, Senator Pimentel requested an inventory of all existing councils that may have an overlapping mandate or function with the proposed Tatak Pinoy Council to check whether such councils are stakeholders' influence or industry-specific.

Adverting to economic complexity, Senator Pimentel asked if a rich country can be considered economically complex if it only has oil as its product or export. Senator Angara explained that many of the oil-producing countries have already imbibed the concept of economic complexity. Resource-rich countries have also discovered that a path to greater prosperity is by pursuing that economic complexity path. Saudi Arabia, one of the country's largest oil producers, has gone into petrochemicals after realizing they have the raw materials. At the same time, Dubai decided to venture into tourism and other industries after learning that their oil industries were drying up.

Thereupon, Senator Pimentel asked whether the Philippines is an economic nation, given the diversity of goods and services or products. The Sponsor stated that the Philippines ranked 33 out of over 150 countries under the Economic Complexity Index (ECI).

On how the Creatives Industry Council would interact with the Tatak Pinoy Council once the bill becomes law, Senator Angara said that regarding the creative industries, the Tatak Pinoy Council must defer to the Creatives Council since the latter already has good programs.

Asked whether the concepts of complexity and sophistication could be scientifically or objectively measured, Senator Angara explained that there is no single measure or indicator. Still, the concepts could be measured by the increase in the country's export, by the value of the export products, and by the country's ranking within the index itself. These indicators tend to show greater complexity.

As to the possibility of the Council recommending that the mining industry export not just ore and how it could be implemented, the Sponsor said that it could be a possibility given the country's substantial reserves of minerals. He further explained that to implement such a recommendation, it may require either a piece of policy or legislation as it has to be compulsory rather than simply speaking to the industry.

Regarding a plan or roadmap of the Council, Senator Angara stated that there must be a short-term that covers one to three years, a medium-term plan that covers six to nine years, and a long-term plan that covers beyond the nine years.

5. Motion of Senator Villanueva to transfer the referral of Senate President Zubiri's speech from the Special Committee on Philippine Maritime and Admiralty Zones to the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation Committee

The session was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.