



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 10303

BY REPRESENTATIVES VILLAFUERTE, CHUNGALAO, AGABAS AND VILLANUEVA (N.), PER COMMITTEE
REPORT NO. 1267

**AN ACT PROVIDING STRONGER MEASURES TO PRESERVE
AGRICULTURAL LAND AND REGULATE ITS CONVERSION FOR
NON-AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES**

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Agricultural Land
2 Preservation Act.”

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to minimize the
4 unnecessary and irreversible conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural
5 uses, and ensure that national government policies and programs administered
6 and implemented for the protection of agricultural land are compatible with the
7 development plans of the local government units (LGUs).

8 SEC. 3. *Conversion of Agricultural Land for Non-Agricultural Uses.* – The

1 Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA)
2 shall, in coordination with the national government agencies (NGAs) and LGUs,
3 develop criteria for identifying the effects of government programs on the
4 conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes and undertake the
5 following measures:

6 (a) Identify the adverse effects of government policies and
7 programs on the preservation of agricultural land;

8 (b) Consider alternative actions, as appropriate, to lessen such adverse effects;
9 and

10 (c) Ensure that the policies and programs of the National Government for the
11 preservation of agricultural lands are practicable and compatible with the
12 development plans of the LGUs.

13 For purposes of this Act, *agricultural land* refers to land devoted to the cultivation
14 of the soil, planting of crops, growing of fruit trees, raising of livestock, poultry
15 or fish, and other farm activities and practices performed by a farmer in
16 conjunction with farming operations done by persons whether natural or juridical.

17 SEC. 4. *Availability of Restorative Information.* – The DAR and the DA shall
18 provide other NGAs, LGUs, organizations, and individuals all the necessary and
19 available information that are pertinent to the restoration, maintenance and
20 improvement of the quantity and quality of agricultural land.

21 SEC. 5. *Review of Existing Policies and Procedures.* – The DAR and the DA
22 shall, in coordination with the NGAs and LGUs, conduct a regular review of

1 existing laws and policies, administrative rules and regulations to determine
2 whether the existing provisions are in accordance with the provisions of this Act
3 and, whenever necessary, develop proposals and take appropriate action to bring
4 government policies, programs and administrative activities into conformity to
5 the purpose of this Act.

6 SEC. 6. *Technical Assistance.* – The Secretary of Agrarian Reform and the
7 Secretary of Agriculture and other department secretaries shall, whenever
8 appropriate, provide technical assistance to LGUs which intend to develop
9 policies or programs that regulate the conversion of prime agricultural land to
10 non-agricultural uses.

11 SEC. 7. *Agricultural Land Resource Information.* – The Secretary of Agrarian
12 Reform and the Secretary of Agriculture shall, in cooperation with other
13 departments and agencies of the government, design and implement educational
14 programs and materials emphasizing the importance of prime agricultural land to
15 the country's well-being and distribute educational materials through mass
16 media, schools, organizations, and other government agencies.

17 SEC. 8. *Reportorial Requirement.* – The Secretary of Agrarian Reform and the
18 Secretary of Agriculture shall submit an annual report to the Congress of the
19 Philippines, through the Committee on Agrarian Reform of the House of
20 Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform
21 of the Senate of the Philippines, on the progress and its compliance with the
22 provisions of this Act on or before January 31 of every year.

1 The annual report shall include an update and information on the effects, if any,
2 of government programs and administrative activities relevant to the preservation
3 of agricultural land; results of the reviews on existing policies and procedures
4 required under Section 5 of this Act and action taken to ensure its observance;
5 and statistical data on agricultural land conversion to non-agricultural uses.

6 SEC. 9. *Limitations.* – This Act does not authorize the government to regulate
7 the use of private agricultural land and affect the property rights of owners of
8 such land; none of the provisions or other requirements of this Act shall apply to
9 the acquisition or use of agricultural land for national defense purposes.

10 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid
11 or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in
12 full force and effect.

13 SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
14 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,