

AN ACT EXTENDING THE LIFE OF THE ABACA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, EXPANDING ITS ACTIVITIES TO COVER OTHER FIBERS, AND MAINTAINING ITS OWN FUNDS.

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4721, June 18, 1966

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the Abaca and Other Fibers Development Program Act.

SEC. 2. It is hereby declared to be a national policy to rehabilitate and expand the abaca and other fibers industry of the country to maintain its world supremacy and the world demand for abaca and other Philippine fibers and their by-products, and to provide adequate measures to ensure permanent stability in the production and consumption of abaca and other fibers.

SEC. 3. The Abaca and Other Fibers Development Program envisioned in this Act shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources, through a Board composed of the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Director of the Bureau Fiber Inspection Service, Commissioner of the agricultural Productivity Commission, one representative each of the three abaca producing regions, namely Bicol, Visayas and Mindanao, and a representative of the Philippine Association of Abaca Producers and Exporters to be appointed by the President of the Philippines for a term of one year with the consent of the Commission on Appointments of the Congress of the Philippines. Each member shall receive a per diem of fifty pesos per meeting actually attended: Provided, That no member shall earn more than two hundred pesos in per diems, allowances and other form of compensation every month.

SEC. 4. The Program shall cover the following phases considered necessary to attain the primary objectives to bring at least to pre-war level the production of abaca and other fibers, to reduce their cost of production in order to compete successfully with other hard fibers in the world markets, to achieve the desired level of abaca and other Philippine fibers exports, and finally, to maintain a well-balanced production and demand of abaca and other fibers:

- Production and distribution of planting materials to be disposed at nominal cost, for the rehabilitation of depleted plantations and expansion to newly opened areas;
- Improvement and operation of fibers extraction methods to reduce cost of production and improve the quality of the fibers;
- Development, establishment, promotion and operation of new industries using abaca and other fibers as raw materials: Provided, That no industry shall be established that will compete with existing industries and once an industry is made self-sustaining and profitable the same shall be turned over to the private enterprises, preferably cooperatives, upon payment of the cost of the machineries and equipment including all taxes, customs duties and other charges assessable and due at the tune of the importation of such machineries and equipment, if not exempted under existing tax laws and tariff regulations;

- Abaca and other fibers scientific, agricultural, Industrial and commercial research;
- Abaca and other fibers local and foreign trade promotion; and
- General administration.

SEC. 5. The balance of appropriations provided for Republic Act Numbered Three thousand forty-five shall continue to be expended to carry out the provisions this Act.

SEC. 6. Any amount earned in the operation of any of the projects under the Abaca and Other Fibers Development program shall be credited to the name of the Program and constituted as a revolving fund to be used as determined by the Program through the resolution of the board.

SEC. 7. The budget and the production plan for each year shall be prepared by the Program and submitted to the Board for approval within thirty days before the end of each fiscal year.

SEC. 8. The Abaca and Other Fibers Development Program shall have an auditor who shall be assisted by his staff to be appointed by the Auditor General, whose salaries and all other expenses of maintaining the auditor's office shall be paid by the Program.

SEC. 9. The general manager of the Abaca and Other Fibers Development Program shall tender a yearly report through the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources to the President of the Philippines, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the operation of the Program, furnishing copies thereof the Committee on Agriculture of both Chambers of Congress, not later than thirty days after the end of each fiscal year.

SEC. 10. All laws or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 11. This Act shall take effect upon its approval and shall continue to be in effect for a period of one year from the approval hereof.

Approved, June 18, 1966.

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