

## **AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE SALE OF AGRICULTURAL PUBLIC LANDS AND AUTHORIZING DISTRICT LAND OFFICERS IN EVERY PROVINCE OF THE BUREAU OF LANDS TO SIGN PATENTS OR CERTIFICATES COVERI...**

*REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6516, July 22, 1972*

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

SECTION 1. Section twenty-five of Commonwealth Act Numbered One hundred forty-one, otherwise known as the "Public Land Act," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 25. Public agricultural lands which are not located within ten (10) kilometers from the boundaries of the city proper in chartered cities or within five (5) kilometers from the municipal hall or town plaza of any municipality may be sold to actual occupants who do not own any parcel of land or whose total landholdings do not exceed five hectares and who comply with the minimum requirements of Commonwealth Act Numbered One hundred forty-one, as amended, and who have resided on the land applied for at least two years prior to the date of the application.

"All bids must be sealed and addressed to the Director of Lands and must have enclosed therewith cash or certified check, treasury or post-office money order payable to order of the Director of Lands, for ten per centum or the amount of the bid, which amount shall be retained in case the bid is accepted as a part payment of the purchase priced: Provided, That no bid shall be considered the amount of which is less than the appraised value of the land.

"In addition to existing publication requirements in Section twenty-four of Commonwealth Act Numbered One hundred forty-one, as amended, notices of applications shall be posted for a period of not less than thirty days in at least three conspicuous places in the municipality where the parcel of land is located, one of which shall be at the municipal building, and other, in the barrio council building of the barrio where the land is located."

SEC. 2. Section twenty-six of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 26. Upon the opening of the bids, the land shall be awarded to the highest bidder. If there are two or more equal bids which are higher than the others, and one of such equal bids is that of the applicant, his bid shall be accepted If, however, the bid of the applicant is not one of such equal and higher bids, the Director of Lands shall at once submit the land for public bidding and to the person making the highest bid on such public auction the land shall be awarded In any case, applicant shall always have the option of raising his bid to equal that of the highest bidder, and in this case the land shall be awarded to him. No bid received at such public auction shall be finally accepted until the bidder shall have deposited ten per centum of his bid, as required in Section twenty five of this Act. In case none of the tracts of land that are .offered for sale or the purchase of which has been applied for, has an area in excess of twenty-four hectares, the Director of Lands may delegate to the district land officer concerned the power of receiving bids, holding the auction, and proceeding in accordance with the provisions of this Act, but the district officer shall submit his recommendation to the Director of Lands for the final decision of latter in the case.

"The district land officer shall accept and process any application for the purchase of public lands not exceeding five hectares subject to the approval of the Director of Lands within sixty days after receipt of the recommendation of said district land officer."

SEC. 3. Section twenty-nine of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 29. After title has been granted, the purchaser may not, within a period of ten years from such cultivation or grant, convey or encumber or dispose said lands or rights thereon to any person, corporation or association, without prejudice to any right or interest of the Government in the land: Provided, That any sale and encumbrance made in violation of the provisions of this section, shall be null and void and shall produce the effect of annulling the acquisition and reverting the property and all rights thereto to the State, and all payments on the purchase price theretofore made to the Government shall be forfeited."

SEC. 4. Section one hundred seven of the same Act, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 107. All patents or certificates for land granted under this Act shall be prepared in the Bureau of Lands and shall be issued in the name of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines under the signature of the President of the Philippines: Provided, however, That the President of the Philippines may delegate to the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources and/or the Undersecretary for Natural Resources the power to sign patent or certificates covering lands exceeding one hundred forty-four hectares in area: Provided, further, That district land officers in every province are hereby empowered to sign patents or certificates covering lands not exceeding five hectares in area when the office of the district land officer is properly equipped to carry out the purposes of this Act: Provided, That no applicant shall be permitted to split the area applied for by him in excess of the area fixed in. this section among his relatives within the sixth degree of consanguinity or affinity excepting the applicant's married children who are actually occupying the land: Provided, Finally, That copies of said patents issued shall be furnished to the Bureau of Lands for records purposes. No patent or certificate shall be issued by the district land officer less the survey of the land coered by such patent or certificate, whether made by the Bureau of Lands or by private surveyor, has be approved by the Director of Lands. The Director of Lands shall promptly act upon all surveys submitted to him for approval and return the same to the district land officer within ninety days after receipt of such surveys by his office. In case of disapproval, the Director of Lands shall state the reasons therefore. Any person aggrieved by the decision or action of the district land officer may, within thirty days from receipt of the copy of the said decision, appeal to the Director of Lands Such patents or certificates shall be effective only for the purposes defined in Section one hundred and twenty-two of the Land Registration Act, and actual conveyance of the land shall be effected only as provided in said section.

"All surveys pending approval by the Director of Lands at the time this Act takes effect shall be acted upon by him within ninety days from the effectivity of this Act,"

SEC. 5. Within six months after the approval of this Act, the Director of Lands shall assign land examiners and other employees in the Bureau of Lands to the different provinces: Provided, That no district land officer shall be appointed or assigned in his own province.

SEC. 6. Any district land officer who violates any of the provisions of this Act shall upon conviction, be punished by a fine of one thousand pesos or imprisonment for four years, or both such fine and imprisonment.

SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, July 22, 1972.

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