Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1267

Submitted by the Committee on Agrarian Reform on September 28, 2021

Re: House Bill No. 10303

Recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Numbered 9133.

Sponsors: Representatives Solomon R. Chungalao and Luis Raymund “LRay” F. Villafuerte

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on Agrarian Reform to which was referred House Bill No. 9133, introduced by Representative Luis Raymund “LRay” F. Villafuerte, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS ON STATISTICS RELATING TO THE CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES INCLUDING A REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES”

has considered the same and recommends that the attached House Bill No. 10303 entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING STRONGER MEASURES TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND AND REGULATE ITS CONVERSION FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES”
be approved in substitution of House Bill Numbered 9133 with Representatives Luis Raymund “LRay” F. Villafuerte, Solomon R. Chungalao, Tyrone D. Agabas and Noel L. Villanueva as authors thereof.

Respectfully submitted:


SOLOMON R. CHUNGALAO
Chairperson
Committee on Agrarian Reform

THE HONORABLE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY
AN ACT PROVIDING STRONGER MEASURES TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND AND REGULATE ITS CONVERSION FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES

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

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

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

SEC. 3. Conversion of Agricultural Land for Non-Agricultural Uses. – The
Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) shall, in coordination with the national government agencies (NGAs) and LGUs, develop criteria for identifying the effects of government programs on the conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes and undertake the following measures:

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

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

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

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

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

SEC. 5. Review of Existing Policies and Procedures. – The DAR and the DA shall, in coordination with the NGAs and LGUs, conduct a regular review of
existing laws and policies, administrative rules and regulations to determine
whether the existing provisions are in accordance with the provisions of this Act
and, whenever necessary, develop proposals and take appropriate action to bring
government policies, programs and administrative activities into conformity to
the purpose of this Act.

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

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

SEC. 8. Reportorial Requirement. – The Secretary of Agrarian Reform and the
Secretary of Agriculture shall submit an annual report to the Congress of the
Philippines, through the Committee on Agrarian Reform of the House of
Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform
of the Senate of the Philippines, on the progress and its compliance with the
provisions of this Act on or before January 31 of every year.
The annual report shall include an update and information on the effects, if any, of government programs and administrative activities relevant to the preservation of agricultural land; results of the reviews on existing policies and procedures required under Section 5 of this Act and action taken to ensure its observance; and statistical data on agricultural land conversion to non-agricultural uses.

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

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

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

Approved,
Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

FACT SHEET

House Bill No. 10303
(In substitution of HB 9133)

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

Introduced by: Representatives Luis Raymund “LRay” F. Villafuerte, Jr., Solomon R. Chungalao, Tyrone D. Agabas and Noel L. Villanueva

Committee Referral: Committee on Agrarian Reform
Committee Chairperson: Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao

OBJECTIVES:

● To preserve agricultural land and regulate conversion for non-agricultural purposes.

● To minimize graft and corruption in agricultural land conversion due to conflicting laws, policies and administrative activities of government agencies.

KEY PROVISIONS:

● Provides that the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and the Department of Agriculture (DA) shall, in coordination with national government agencies and local government units develop the criteria for identifying the effects of government programs on the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, and to use these criteria to identify government programs and policies that are contrary to the preservation of agricultural land, vis-a-vis its practicability and compatibility with the development plans of local government units.

● Provides for the review of existing policies and procedures that are not in consonance with the proposed Agricultural Land Preservation Act.

● Mandates the Secretaries of the DAR, the DA and other department secretaries to provide technical assistance to local government units in developing programs to regulate the conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.
● Mandates government agencies to design and implement educational programs and materials that emphasize the importance of prime agricultural land and to disseminate the educational materials through the mass media, schools, organizations and other government agencies.

● Mandates the Secretaries of the DAR and the DA to submit an annual report to the Congress of the Philippines, through the Committee on Agrarian Reform of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform of the Senate of the Philippines on the progress made in the implementation of the law.

RELATED LAWS:

● R.A. No. 6657, Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988
● R.A. No. 9700, Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms