

24 February 2020

MR. REYNALDO O. CABANSAG

Acting Committee Secretary
Committee on Muslim Affairs
House of Representatives
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills
Quezon City, Philippines

Dear **Mr. Cabansag**:

We are pleased to submit the Department's position on the proposed legislation, entitled:

House Bill No. 2291

“An Act Requiring Supermarkets, Meat Shops, and Public and Private Markets in Metropolitan and Urban Areas and Such Areas with Significant Muslim Population in the Entire Country, to Segregate Non-Pork Meat Products from Pork Products and Its Derivatives or Any Product Containing Pork or Any of Its Derivatives”

This is without prejudice to the Department's submission of additional inputs.

With my best regards.

Very truly yours,



RAMON M. LOPEZ
Secretary

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DTI Position on

House Bill No. 2291

“An Act Requiring Supermarkets, Meat Shops, and Public and Private Markets in Metropolitan and Urban Areas and Such Areas with Significant Muslim Population in the Entire Country, to Segregate Non-Pork Meat Products from Pork Products and Its Derivatives or Any Product Containing Pork or Any of Its Derivatives”

The Department recognizes the objective of the proposed legislation to require supermarkets, meat shops, and public and private markets to segregate non-pork products from pork products and its derivatives to ensure the non-contamination of the former in observance of the religious practices of Islam.

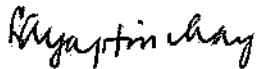
Relative to the stipulations under the proposed legislation, DTI submits its specific comments and recommendations including:

Stipulations under House Bill (HB) No. 2291	DTI Comments/Recommendations
1. Section 1. Segregation of Non-Pork Products	<p>Compliance to the segregation of non-pork products in all phases involving handling, storage, and selling may increase operational costs of businesses through additional space requirements and manpower.</p> <p>Instead of mandatory segregation, the DTI recommends strengthening current initiatives on awareness and information dissemination, including the National Halal Conference, the Muslim-friendly Tourism Program, and various trade promotion events as a means to encourage business establishments to voluntarily observe product segregation.</p> <p>This is also seen to further the objectives of the Department of Tourism (DOT) to develop Halal tourism given the large but declining tourism arrivals from Islamic countries.¹</p>
2. Section 2. Exclusivity of Equipment, Utensils, and Devices for Non-Pork Products	<p>The additional requirement of having exclusive equipment, utensils, and devices for non-pork products also imposes higher capital expenditures on the enterprises, which may be transferred to the consuming public in the form of higher commodity prices.</p>

¹ Department of Tourism data on tourist arrivals from January to August 2019 show declining tourist arrivals from ASEAN countries: Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia; and Middle Eastern countries: Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Kuwait.

	<p>In lieu of this, establishments wanting to cater to Muslim consumers, who comprise 6% of the country's total population or 6 million Muslim Filipinos,² may opt to be voluntarily certified by accredited Halal-certifiers as stipulated in (c) and (d) of Section 11 of RA No. 10817 or the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Act of 2016.</p>
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The Department reiterates its reservations to the proposal to require all supermarkets, meat shops, and public and private markets to segregate non-pork meat products from pork products and its derivatives, as it may result to higher commodity prices to the detriment of the consumers in general. However, we recommend strengthening current initiatives on information dissemination, public awareness, and voluntary Halal certification by establishments that choose to cater to Muslim consumers.



Bureau of Trade and Industrial Policy Research
24 February 2020

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² Philippine Statistics Authority 2015 Census, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/philippine-population-surpassed-100-million-mark-results-2015-census-population>