

11 September 2019

SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS

Chairperson
Senate Committee on Cultural Communities
Senate of the Philippines,
Pasay City, Manila Philippines

Dear Senator Marcos:

We are pleased to submit the Department's comments and recommendations on **Senate Bill Nos. 443 and 706**, entitled:

Senate Bill No. 443 "An Act Establishing Resource Centers for Indigenous Peoples to Enhance and Ensure Delivery of Essential Services, Appropriating Funds therefor and For Other Purposes"

Senate Bill No. 706 "An Act Establishing Resource Centers for Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples to Enhance and Ensure Delivery of Essential Services, Appropriating Funds therefor and For Other Purposes"

With my best regards.

Very truly yours,

RAMON M. LOPEZ
Secretary



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DTI Position on

Senate Bill No. 443 “An Act Establishing Resource Centers for Indigenous Peoples to Enhance and Ensure Delivery of Essential Services, Appropriating Funds therefor and For Other Purposes”

Senate Bill No. 706 “An Act Establishing Resource Centers for Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples to Enhance and Ensure Delivery of Essential Services, Appropriating Funds therefor and For Other Purposes”

The Department supports the development and protection of Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs)/Indigenous Peoples (IPs) within the framework of national unity in accordance with the Constitution. These Filipinos have historical and cultural ties with the land; maintaining their way of life, values, social institutions and religions.¹ However, the Department expresses its reservation on the proposed measures as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) already performs the mandate of protecting and promoting the interest and wellbeing of the ICCs/IPs with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions.² We note that the proposed institutionalization of Resource Centers (RCs) under NCIP may duplicate established functions of existing community service centers (CSCs) under the same Commission; bearing the same mandate.

If passed into law, RCs will be institutionalized under NCIP to enhance and ensure the delivery of basic services (e.g., employment, education, health, among others). The centers shall be composed of the following service areas (SAs), to wit: (1) Statistical Service Area; (2) Human Development Index Service Area; and (3) Domain Management Service Area. We note that the abovementioned SAs and their proposed functions are already existing in the NCIP under: (1) Office on Policy, Planning and Research; (2) Office on Education, Culture and Health; and (3) Ancestral Domains Office, respectively. The delivery of the abovementioned services are currently coursed through their regional, provincial and CSCs – NCIP’s basic unit of organization.

In addition, there are 108 established and operating CSCs in strategic locations nationwide as determined by NCIP.³ We recommend that the CSCs be assessed – based on their performance of their roles and functions – to determine if there is a need to expand their mandates. We also recommend that CSCs be located within Local Government Units (LGUS), similar to the Department of Trade and Industry’s Negosyo Center (NC) framework, for a much efficient and effective delivery of intended services for ICCs/IPs. At present, 1,073 NCs are located in strategic areas (i.e., DTI offices, Local Government Units, academic partners, non-

¹ <https://rightforeducation.org/2017/01/protect-rights-indigenous-people/>

² Republic Act No. 8371 of the “Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997”

³ <http://www.ncip.gov.ph/>

government organizations and malls) ready to serve existing and would be entrepreneurs.⁴ We opine that effective CSCs would suffice to safeguard the protection of these Filipinos; help promote tourism and serve as one-stop shops, among others, thereby alleviating the lives of ICC/IPs.

The Department reiterates its support for the development of ICCs/IPs as these Filipinos have preserved their heritage, thus, the Filipino culture and identity. We wish to recommend that an assessment of the existing NCIP along with its offices and CSCs be performed in accordance with the performance of their mandate.

Rajapinchoy

Bureau of Trade and Industrial Policy Research
11 September 2019

Ref: BTIPR-082019-155

/ajds

⁴ <https://www.dti.gov.ph/programs-projects/negosyo-center>