

### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES KAGAWARAN NG KAPALIGIRAN AT LIKAS YAMAN



### **MEMORANDUM**

FOR

The Directors

Legal Affairs Service

Policy and Planning Service Climate Change Service

The Bureau Directors

**Environmental Management Bureau** 

Land Management Bureau Forest Management Bureau

Biodiversity Management Bureau

The OIC Director

Mines and Geosciences Bureau

The Administrator

National Mapping Resource and Information Authority

The Regional Executive Director

Region III - Central Luzon

FROM

The Director

Legislative Liaison Office

**SUBJECT** 

ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BULACAN AIRPORT CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES AND FREEPORT ACT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES

DATE

30 January 2024

In reference to the email received by our Office, the Committee on Economic Affairs joint with the Committees on Local Government; Ways and Means; and, Finance's Public Hearing on 31 January 2024, Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Sen. Pecson Room, 2nd Floor, Senate of the Philippines, will also include the SB 2524 and HB 8841 in its agenda, as follows:

1. Senate Bill No. 1013 entitled, "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport, Province of Bulacan and Appropriating Funds Therefor" (Introduced by Sen. Imee Marcos); and

- 2. **Senate Bill No. 2266** entitled, "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport, Province of Bulacan, and Appropriating Funds Therefor" (Introduced by Sen. Juan Miguel "Migz" F. Zubiri).
- 3. **Senate Bill No. 2524**, entitled: "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport in the Province of Bulacan, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for other Purposes" (Introduced by Sen. Villanueva); and
- 4. **House Bill No. 8841,** entitled: "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport in the Province of Bulacan, Creating for the Purpose the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, and Appropriating Funds Therefor". (Introduced by Representatives Salceda, Valmayor, Mariño, et a.l)

In this regard, may we respectfully request your comments/recommendations on the abovementioned bills, if as requested by the Committee. Kindly submit your comments via email at <a href="mailto@denr.gov.ph">denr.gov.ph</a>. Further, kindly inform us of the name/s and emails of the representative/s from your office who will participate in the meeting so we may include him/her/them as resource person/s.

Attached herewith are the Letter Invitation and a copy of the bills for your reference.

ROMIROSE B. PADIN

cc: Undersecretary for Special Concerns and Legislative Affairs



## OSEC-2024-000465: [NOTICE OF ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA] Committee on Economic Affairs Public Hearing 31 JANUARY 2024 (Wednesday), 10:30 AM, Sen. Pecson Room

2 messages

#### Office of the DENR Secretary <osec@denr.gov.ph>

Tue, Jan 30, 2024 at 11:11 AM

To: DENR Legislative Liaison Office <denr||o@denr.gov.ph>

Cc: Undersecretary for Special Concern and Legislative Affairs <ouscla@denr.gov.ph>, Ignatius Rodriguez <iarodriguez@denr.gov.ph>

Greetings!

This is to respectfully refer, for information and appropriate action, the email below.

We will appreciate informing the Office of the Secretary (OSEC) of the action taken on the matter.

Thank you!

Office of the Secretary Department of Environment and Natural Resources



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Senate Committee on Economic Affairs <senateeconaffairs,19thcongress@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jan 29, 2024 at 6:52 PM

Subject: [NOTICE OF ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA] Committee on Economic Affairs Public Hearing 31 JANUARY

2024 (Wednesday), 10:30 AM, Sen. Pecson Room

To:

29 January 2024

#### Dear Sir/Ma'am:

Please be informed that the Public Hearing of the Committee on Economic Affairs, joint with the Committees on Local Government; Ways and Means; and Finance, on <u>WEDNESDAY</u>, 31 JANUARY 2024, 10:30 a.m., at <u>SENATOR PECSON ROOM</u>, 2nd Floor, Senate of the Philippines, <u>will also include in its agenda:</u>

- 1. **Senate Bill No. 2524,** entitled: "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport in the Province of Bulacan, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for other Purposes" (Introduced by Sen. Villanueva); and
- 2. **House Bill No. 8841**, entitled: "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport in the Province of Bulacan, Creating for the Purpose the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, and Appropriating Funds Therefor". (Introduced by Representatives Salceda, Valmayor, Mariño, et a.l)

Attached are the legislative measures for your reference.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this email.

Thank you.



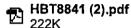
### Senate Committee on Economic Affairs Secretariat

Reply email to senateeconaffairs.19thcongress@gmail.com | econaffairs.senate@gmail.com | rtr., Senate of the Philippines, Diokno Blvd., Pasay City (632) 8552-6601 loc. 3301-06, (632) 8552-6820 Monday - Thursday, 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM

♣ Please consider your environmental responsibility. SAVE PAPER – Think before you print.

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#### 2 attachments





**DENR Legislative Liaison Office** <denrllo@denr.gov.ph> To: luispaolom@gmail.com Tue, Jan 30, 2024 at 11:12 AM

[Quoted text hidden]

Legislative Liaison Office 2nd floor, DENR - Central Office Visayas Avenue, Diliman Quezon City 920-1761 VOIP 1174

### 2 attachments

HBT8841 (2).pdf

SBN 2524.pdf 226K

# NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES Second Regular Session



24 JAN 23 P3:38

RECEIVED BY.

**SENATE** 

)

S.B. No. <u>2524</u>

### Introduced by SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA

### **AN ACT**

ESTABLISHING THE BULACAN AIRPORT CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT IN THE PROVINCE OF BULACAN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Economic zones are vital instruments in boosting economic growth and generating employment in the host locality and adjacent areas, contributing to the overall national growth.

Creating a special economic zone in Bulacan will contribute to the further development of the province which is expected to accommodate millions of people annually with the completion of the New Manila International Airport in 2027. This measure creating the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport is a recalibration of the bill filed in the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress and introduces new provisions and safeguards to ensure that the creation and operation of the proposed Bulacan Ecozone is within the framework of national development plans, policies, and goals and subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations. Specifically, the following are included in the measure:

- a) Specific metes and bounds of the economic zone, covering the domestic and international airport, the Airport City to be developed pursuant to Section 6 of Republic Act No. 11506, and lands adjacent to the Airport City within the territorial jurisdiction of the Municipality of Bulakan. It is also provided that subsequent expansion of the territorial coverage of the Bulacan Ecozone shall be made through a Presidential Proclamation;
- b) Governing principles consistent with the mandate of other government agencies, as well as existing laws, rules, and regulations. These include the procedure for the acquisition of lands distributed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform

Program and establishment of a cost-sharing scheme for the security of the Bulacan Ecozone to address fiscal concerns;

- c) No specific capital stock for the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (BACSEZFA) that the national and local governments must subscribe to and pay for. To allay fears that local governments may not have the necessary resources to capitalize the BACSEZFA, up to 20% of shares may be sold to the general public;
- d) The powers and functions of the BACSEZFA shall be subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that the Authority does not take away the regulatory, supervisory, or operating powers being exercised by other government agencies;
- e) All benefits and emoluments of the members of the Board of Directors of BACSEZFA shall be subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, including those prescribed by the Governance Commission for GOCCs;
- f) Fiscal incentives shall be consistent with the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act;
- g) The BACSEZFA shall be subject to the audit mechanisms under the GOCC Governance Act and shall not be exempt from relevant laws, rules, and regulations on evaluation by the Commission on Audit; and
- h) To safeguard public interest, the decision of the Office of the President of the Philippines shall prevail in case of any conflict between the BACSEZFA and a national government agency in the Executive branch on matters affecting the Bulacan Ecozone, other than taxation, national defense, or security, which are solely within the purview of government.

The proposed Bulacan Ecozone is estimated to bring in US\$200 billion in annual export revenues from potential investors from the aviation, manufacturing, technology, education, healthcare, and tourism industries.<sup>1</sup> It will provide jobs and livelihoods to thousands, if not millions, of Filipinos, as well as develop the country's economy with investments and infrastructure. Further, it is seen to complement the construction of the New Manila International Airport, which will become one of the most important gateways in the country.

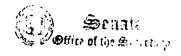
For these reasons, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

<sup>1</sup> The Manila Times. Ecozone to bring \$200-B govt revenues. 06 July 2022. Available at <a href="https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/06/news/regions/ecozone-to-bring-200-b-govt-revenues/1849893">https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/06/news/regions/ecozone-to-bring-200-b-govt-revenues/1849893</a>. Accessed on 08 August 2023.

JOEL VILLANUEV

### NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**Second Regular Session** 



24 JAN 23 P3:38

SENATE

S.B. No. <u>2524</u>



### Introduced by SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA

### **AN ACT**

ESTABLISHING THE BULACAN AIRPORT CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT IN THE PROVINCE OF BULACAN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

### CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

**SECTION 1.** Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to encourage, promote, and accelerate the sound and balanced industrial, economic, and social development of the country. The establishment of a strategically-located, master-planned, and value creation-oriented special economic zone shall attract legitimate and productive foreign investments that generate employment and increase productivity and incomes, thereby enhancing the quality of life of the Filipino people.

### CHAPTER II CREATION OF THE ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT

SEC. 3. Creation of the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport. — In accordance with the declared State policy and subject to the concurrence of the affected local government units (LGUs) of Bulacan, there is hereby established a Special Economic Zone and Freeport, hereinafter referred to as the Bulacan Ecozone. The Bulacan Ecozone shall cover the domestic and international airport, the Airport City to be developed pursuant to Section 6 of Republic Act No. 11506, and lands adjacent to the Airport City within the territorial jurisdiction of the Municipality of Bulakan: Provided, That the lands embraced therein shall be contiguous to one another: Provided further, That subsequent expansions of the territorial coverage of the Bulacan Ecozone shall be made through a Presidential

Proclamation: *Provided finally*, That the acquisition of land by the Bulacan Ecozone in areas outside of its territorial coverage shall not automatically expand the same.

**SEC. 4.** Creation of the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority. – There is hereby created a body corporate to be known as the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, hereinafter referred to as the BACSEZFA, which shall manage and operate the Bulacan Ecozone, in accordance with the provisions of this Act. The corporate life of the BACSEZFA shall expire in fifty (50) years counted from the first year after the effectivity of this Act, unless otherwise extended by Congress. It shall be organized within one hundred eighty (180) days after the effectivity of this Act.

**SEC. 5.** Governing Principles. – The BACSEZFA, created under Section 4 of this Act, shall manage and operate the Bulacan Ecozone under the following principles:

(a) Within the framework and limitations of the Constitution and applicable provisions of the Local Government Code, the Bulacan Ecozone shall have a domestic and international airport and be developed into and operated as a decentralized, selfreliant, and self-sustaining industrial, commercial/trading, agro-industrial, tourist, banking, financial, and investment center with suitable residential areas under the Airport City;

(b) The Bulacan Ecozone shall be equipped with transportation, telecommunications, and other facilities needed to attract legitimate and productive investments and generate linkage industries and employment opportunities for the people of the Municipality of Bulakan and its neighboring towns and cities;

(c) The Bulacan Ecozone may establish mutually beneficial economic relations with other entities or enterprises within the country or, subject to the administrative guidance of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), and/or the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), with foreign entities or enterprises;

(d) Subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, foreign citizens and companies owned by non-Filipinos in whatever proportion may set up enterprises in the Bulacan Ecozone, either by themselves or in a joint venture with Filipinos in any sector of industry, international trade, and commerce within the Bulacan Ecozone;

(e) The Bulacan Ecozone shall be managed and operated as a separate customs territory thereby ensuring the free flow or movement of goods and capital within, into, and out of its territory, and shall likewise provide incentives such as tax and duty-free importation of raw materials, capital, and equipment to registered enterprises located therein. However, exportation or removal of goods from the territory of the Bulacan Ecozone to the other parts of the Philippine territory shall be subject to customs duties and taxes under the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) and other relevant tax laws of the Philippines;

- (f) The areas comprising the Bulacan Ecozone may be expanded or reduced when necessary through a Presidential Proclamation issued for the said purpose. The BACSEZFA, in consultation with the LGUs, shall have the power to acquire either by purchase, negotiation or condemnation proceedings, any private land within or adjacent to the Bulacan Ecozone for the following purposes: (1) consolidation of lands for zone development; (2) acquisition of right of way to the Bulacan Ecozone; and (3) expansion of the Bulacan Ecozone: *Provided*, That the acquisition by the BACSEZFA of lands distributed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program shall be subject to clearance from the Secretary of Agrarian Reform, after the process of obtaining from and certifying to the existence of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent by agrarian reform beneficiaries. The Secretary of Agrarian Reform shall issue implementing rules and regulations on the process of acquiring agrarian reform lands under this paragraph;
- (g) Goods manufactured by a Bulacan Ecozone enterprise shall be made available for immediate retail sale in the domestic market, subject to the payment of corresponding taxes on raw materials and other regulations that may be formulated by the BACSEZFA together with the PEZA, the Bureau of Customs (BOC), and the DTI. However, in order to protect domestic industries, a Negative List of industries shall be drawn up and regularly updated by the Inter-agency Investment Promotion Coordination Committee (IIPCC), pursuant to Republic Act No. 7042, otherwise known as the Foreign Investments Act, as amended, and other relevant laws, rules, and regulations. Enterprises engaged in industries included in such Negative List shall not be allowed to sell their products locally;
- (h) The defense of the Bulacan Ecozone and the security of its perimeter fence shall be the responsibility of the National Government in coordination with the BACSEZFA and the LGUs: *Provided*, That for the costs of securing the Bulacan Ecozone, the Office of the President, upon the recommendation of the Department of Finance (DOF), shall establish a cost-sharing scheme between the BACSEZFA and the relevant national government agencies.
- SEC. 6. Development Goals of the Bulacan Ecozone. The BACSEZFA shall include in its development goals for the Bulacan Ecozone the construction and operation of a domestic and international airport and allied businesses within the framework of national development plans, policies and goals. The Chairperson-Administrator shall, upon approval by the Board, submit the Bulacan Ecozone plans, programs, and projects to the Regional Development Council (RDC) for inclusion and inputs to the overall regional development plan.

### **SEC. 7. Capitalization.** – The capital of the BACSEZFA shall consist of:

- (a) Its assets and such other properties as may be contributed to the BACSEZFA by the Government to form part of capital;
- (b) All capitalized surplus;

- 48 (c) Any cash contribution by the Government; and
  - (d) Any budgetary outlay allocated and released in favor of the BACSEZFA.

Thereafter, any sum as may be necessary to augment its capital outlay shall be included in the General Appropriations Act to be treated as an equity of the National Government. Additional funding shall come from the following:

(a) The annual subsidies, appropriations, and/or other assets of the Bulacan Ecozone;

(b) The proceeds from the rent of lands, buildings, and other properties of the Bulaçan Ecozone;

(c) The proceeds from fees, charges, and other revenue-generating instruments which the Bulacan Ecozone is authorized to impose and collect under this Act;

(d) The proceeds from bonds which the Bulacan Ecozone is authorized to float both domestic and abroad; and

(e) The advance rentals, license fees, and other charges which the Bulacan Ecozone is authorized to impose under this Act and which an investor is willing to advance payment for.

The Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA may, with the authorization of the President, and subject to the concurrence and prescribed manner of disposition by the Secretary of Finance, sell shares, representing not more than twenty per centum (20%) of the capital stock of the BACSEZFA to the general public under such policy as the Board and the Secretary of Finance may determine. The National Government shall in no case own less than sixty per centum (60%) of the total issued and outstanding capital of the BACSEZFA: *Provided*, That the sale of shares to the public shall, in no manner, alter the composition of the BACSEZFA Board.

**SEC. 8.** *Principal Office of the BACSEZFA.* – The BACSEZFA shall maintain its principal office at the Airport City, but it may establish liaison offices within the Philippines as may be necessary for the proper conduct of its business.

**SEC. 9.** *Powers and Functions of the BACSEZFA*. – The BACSEZFA shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) To operate, administer, manage, and develop the Bulacan Ecozone according to the principles and provisions set forth in this Act;

(b) To register, regulate, and supervise the enterprises in the Bulacan Ecozone in an efficient and decentralized manner, subject to existing laws;

(c) To coordinate with LGUs and exercise general supervision over the development plans, activities, and operations of the Bulacan Ecozone;

(d) To undertake, subject to the approval and regulation of relevant government agencies wherever applicable, the establishment, construction, operation, and maintenance of public utilities, other services, and infrastructure in the Bulacan Ecozone such as light and power, shipping, barging, stevedoring, cargo

handling, hauling, warehousing, storage of cargo, port services or concessions, piers, wharves, bulkheads, bulk terminals, mooring areas, storage areas, roads, telecommunications, transport, bridges, terminals, conveyors, water supply and storage, sewerage, drainage, airport operations in coordination with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) and such other services or infrastructure necessary or incidental to the accomplishment of the objectives of this Act: *Provided*, That prior to undertaking the establishment, construction, or operation of infrastructure, utilities, or services that it will also regulate, supervise, or oversee, the BACSEZFA shall seek and abide by a plan for mitigating potential conflicts of interest from the Governance Commission for Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations (GCG): *Provided further*, That detailed and comprehensive reports on compliance with the mitigation plan shall be submitted to the GCG, the Office of the President, and the Congress:

(e) To construct, acquire, own, lease, operate, and maintain on its own or through contracts, franchise, licenses, bulk purchase from the private sector, or permits under any of the schemes allowed in Republic Act No. 11966, otherwise known as the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines, adequate facilities and infrastructure required or needed for the operation and development of the Bulacan Ecozone, in coordination with appropriate national and local government authorities and in conformity with applicable laws thereon;

(f) To approve plans, programs, and projects of the Bulacan Ecozone, to be submitted to the RDC for inclusion and inputs to the overall regional development plan;

(g) To raise or borrow, within the limitation provided by law, and subject to the approval of the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), as the case may be, adequate and necessary funds from local or foreign sources to finance its projects and programs under this Act and for this purpose, to issue bonds, promissory notes and other forms of securities, and to secure the same by a guarantee, pledge, mortgage, deed of trust or an assignment of all or part of its property or assets;

(h) To protect, preserve, maintain, and develop the forests, beaches, coral and coral reefs, and maintain ecological balance within the Bulacan Ecozone. The rules and regulations of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other government agencies involved in the above functions shall be implemented by the BACSEZFA;

(i) To create, operate, or contract to operate such functional units or offices of the BACSEZFA as it may deem necessary;

(j) To adopt, alter, and use a corporate seal; contract, lease, buy, acquire, own, or otherwise dispose of personal and/or real property of whatever nature; sue and be sued; and otherwise carry out its functions and duties as provided for in this Act;

- (k) To issue certificates of origin for products manufactured or processed in the Bulacan Ecozone in accordance with prevailing rules of origin and the pertinent regulations of the PEZA, the DTI and/or the DOF;
- (I) To establish one-stop shops for the issuance of all necessary permits, clearances, licenses, and other similar certifications to conduct such activities intended to improve the ease of doing business within the Bulacan Ecozone, in coordination with government agencies having jurisdiction over activities therein: Provided, That all government agencies are directed to provide and extend utmost and full cooperation to the BACSEZFA in the establishment of such one-stop shops;
- (m) To provide internal security to the Bulacan Ecozone in coordination with the National Government and affected LGU. For this purpose, the BACSEZFA shall provide and establish its own internal security and firefighting forces or hire others to provide the same. Military forces to be assigned by the National Government for national defense purposes shall not interfere in the internal affairs of the Bulacan Ecozone and expenditures for these military forces shall be borne by the National Government;
- (n) To exercise such powers, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, as may be essential, necessary, or incidental to the powers granted to it hereunder, as well as those that shall enable it to carry out, implement and accomplish the purposes, objectives, and policies of this Act; and
- (o) To issue rules and regulations within the exercise of its powers under this section, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.
- **SEC. 10.** Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA. The powers of the BACSEZFA shall be vested in and exercised by a Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, which shall be composed of the following:
- (a) The Chairperson, who shall at the same time be the administrator of the BACSEZFA;
- (b) A Vice Chairperson who shall be elected from among the Members of the Board of Directors:
- (c) Members consisting of:

- (1) The Socioeconomic Planning Secretary or a designated representative of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
- (2) The Secretary or a designated representative of the DTI;
- (3) The Secretary or a designated representative of the DOF;
- (4) One (1) representative from the Province of Bulacan, who shall be a public officer;

(5) One (1) representative from the Municipality of Bulakan, who shall be a public officer:

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(6) One (1) representative from investors in the Bulacan Ecozone;

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(7) One (1) representative from the workers working in the Bulacan Ecozone.

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The Chairperson and the members of the Board shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines to serve for a term of six (6) years, unless sooner separated from service due to death, voluntary resignation, or removal for cause. In case of death, resignation, or removal for cause, their replacements shall serve only the unexpired portion of the respective terms.

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Except for the representatives from the business and labor sectors, no person shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines as a member of the Board unless he is a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of proven probity and integrity, and a degree-holder in any of the following fields: economics, business, public administration, law, management or their equivalent, and with at least ten (10) years relevant working experience preferably in the field of management or public administration.

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All benefits and emoluments of the members of the Board shall be subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, including those prescribed by the GCG.

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SEC. 11. Organization and Personnel. - The Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA shall provide for its organization and staff. The Board shall appoint and fix the remuneration and other emoluments of its officers and employees in accordance with existing laws on compensation and position classification. The Board shall have exclusive and final authority to promote, transfer, assign, reassign, or remove officers of the BACSEZFA, any provision of existing law to the contrary notwithstanding. The Chairperson-Administrator shall execute the decisions of the Board.

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The officers and employees of the BACSEZFA, including all members of the Board, shall not engage directly or indirectly in partisan activities nor take part in any election, except to vote.

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No officer or employee of the BACSEZFA, subject to civil service laws and regulations, shall be removed or suspended except for cause, as provided by civil service law and regulations.

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SEC. 12. Powers and Duties of the Chairperson-Administrator. - The Chairperson-Administrator shall have the following powers and duties:

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To direct and manage the affairs of the BACSEZFA in accordance with the (a) policies of the Board;

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To establish the internal organization of the BACSEZFA under such conditions (b) that the Board may prescribe;

- (c) To submit an annual budget and necessary supplemental budget to the Board for its approval;
- (d) To submit within thirty (30) days after the close of each fiscal year an annual report to the Board and such other reports as may be required;
- (e) To submit to the Board for its approval policies, systems, procedures, rules, and regulations that are essential to the operation of the Bulacan Ecozone;
- (f) To recommend to the Board the remuneration and other emoluments of its officers and employees in accordance with existing laws on compensation and position classification;
- (g) To create a mechanism, in coordination with relevant agencies, for the promotion of industrial peace, the protection of the environment, and the advancement of the quality of life in the Bulacan Ecozone; and
- (h) To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board or which are necessary or incidental to the office.
- **SEC. 13.** Legal Counsel. The BACSEZFA shall have its own internal legal counsel under the supervision of the government corporate counsel. When the exigencies of its businesses and operations demand it, the BACSEZFA may engage the services of an outside counsel either on a case to case or on a fixed retainer basis.

### CHAPTER III INCENTIVES TO ECOZONE ENTERPRISES/INVESTORS

- **SEC. 14.** *Investors Visa.* Any foreign national who invests an amount of two hundred thousand US dollars (US\$200,000.00), either in cash and/or equipment, in a registered enterprise shall be entitled to an investor's visa: *Provided*, That the foreign national:
- (a) Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age;

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- (b) Must not have been convicted by final judgment of a crime involving moral turpitude;
- (c) Must not be afflicted with any loathsome, dangerous, or contagious disease;
- (d) Must not have been confined in an institution for any mental disorder or disability; and
- (e) Must be financially capable as proven by credible and verifiable evidence.

A foreign national shall be granted permanent resident status within the territorial coverage of the Bulacan Ecozone while the investment subsists. To prove this, the foreign national shall submit an annual report in the form duly prescribed for the purpose. Should said investments be withdrawn from the Philippines, the investor's visa issued to said foreign national shall automatically expire or be withdrawn. The

Bulacan Ecozone may also recommend to the Bureau of Immigration (BI) the grant of visas providing more favorable terms of residency to a foreign national who meets the criteria under this section.

The authority to issue visas and work permits shall remain with the BI and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), respectively: *Provided*, That the BI and the DOLE shall implement measures to expedite the processing of such visas and permits for workers in the Bulacan Ecozone and coordinate with the BACSEZFA for the purpose of improving ease of doing business.

**SEC. 15.** *Fiscal incentives.* – Registered enterprises operating within the Bulacan Ecozone may apply for pertinent fiscal incentives granted under Title XIII of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC), as amended, and for such other fiscal incentives as may be provided by law: *Provided*, That the grant of fiscal incentives shall be subject to Section 292 of the NIRC, as amended.

SEC. 16. Administration, Implementation, and Monitoring of Incentives. – In the interest of enhancing transparency in the management and accounting of tax incentives in the Bulacan Ecozone, and ensuring the proper administration, management, enforcement, implementation, and monitoring of tax incentives, the BACSEZFA shall comply with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10708, otherwise known as the Tax Incentives Management and Transparency Act (TIMTA) and its implementing rules and regulations, and other rules, regulations, and issuances made by the Fiscal Incentives Review Board, pursuant to Chapter III, Title XIII of the NIRC, as amended.

The BOC shall set up and establish a customs-controlled area outside the premises of the Bulacan Ecozone to facilitate payment of duties and taxes on goods entering the Philippine customs territory: *Provided*, That notwithstanding the limitations on this Act, the BACSEZFA and BOC may coordinate and jointly implement measures on border protection.

**SEC. 17.** Banking Rules and Regulations. – Banks and financial institutions to be established in the Bulacan Ecozone shall be under the supervision of the BSP and subject to existing banking laws, rules, and regulations.

**SEC. 18.** Remittances. – In the case of foreign investments, a duly registered entity or enterprise within the Bulacan Ecozone shall have the right to remit earnings from the investment in the currency in which the investment was originally made and at the exchange rate prevailing at the time of remittance, subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 7653, otherwise known as The New Central Bank Act, as amended, and other relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

### CHAPTER IV NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ENTITIES

**SEC. 19.** Supervision and Control. – For purposes of policy direction and coordination, the BACSEZFA shall be under the direct supervision and control of the Office of the President of the Philippines.

**SEC. 20.** Relationship with Local Government Units and the National Government. – Except as herein provided, the LGUs comprising the Bulacan Ecozone shall retain their basic autonomy and identity. The Municipality of Bulakan, and the Province of Bulacan, shall operate and function in accordance with the framework of the Constitution, the Local Government Code, and this Act.

Subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, in case of conflict among the BACSEZFA and the LGUs on matters directly and inextricably affecting the Bulacan Ecozone, other than taxation, national defense, or security, the decision of the BACSEZFA shall prevail. In case of any conflict between a national government agency within the Executive Branch and the BACSEZFA on matters directly and inextricably affecting the Bulacan Ecozone, other than taxation, national defense, or security, the decision of the Office of the President shall prevail.

**SEC. 21.** Audit. – The Commission on Audit (COA) shall appoint a full-time auditor in the BACSEZFA or may assign such number of personnel as may be necessary in the performance of its functions. The BACSEZFA shall be subject to the audit mechanisms under Sections 24, 25, and 26 of Republic Act No. 10149, otherwise known as the GOCC Governance Act of 2011. The BACSEZFA shall not be exempt from relevant laws, rules, and regulations on evaluation by the COA.

### CHAPTER V MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

**SEC. 22.** Interpretation and Construction. – The powers, authorities, and functions that are vested in the BACSEZFA are intended to establish national self-sufficiency and self-reliance in the advancement of and protection of the national integrity, enhancement of national security, and decentralization of governmental functions and authority, and promote an efficient and effective working relationship among the BACSEZFA, the National Government and the LGUs. Any interpretation of this Act shall consider such intentions. In the event of conflict of interpretation and provided the intentions cannot be harmonized, the provisions of this Act shall be construed in favor of an interpretation that would tend to protect national interest and security.

**SEC. 23.** Applicability Clause. – Insofar as they are consistent with this Act, the provisions of Sections 30 to 41 of Republic Act No. 7916, otherwise known as The Special Economic Zone Act of 1995, shall likewise apply to the Bulacan Ecozone.

**SEC. 24.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DTI, DOF, and NEDA shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

**SEC. 25.** Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

**SEC. 26.** Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive issuances, and rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 27. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

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### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

#### H. No. 8841

By Representatives Salceda, Valmayor, Mariño, Cruz (A.), Loyola, Pancho, Villarica, Pleyto, Silverio, Robes, Singson-Meehan, Espina, Villa, Yap (C.), Yap (C.T.), Gorriceta, Co-Pilar, Tarriela, Rodriguez (R.), Maceda, Del Mar, Haresco, Padiernos, Sali, Tamayo, Limkaichong, Chan, Bascug, Mariano-Hernandez, Garcia (D.), Guintu, Abalos, Veloso-Tuazon, Eudela, Matibag, Violago, Solon, Go (M.), Escudero, Cruz (R.), Bondoc, Regencia, Chatto, Oaminal, Suansing (M.A.), Dionisio, Dayanghirang, Lagon (S.), Briones, Ty, Yap (Eric), Ferrer (J.M.), Fuentebella, Palma, Bernos, Cagas, Vargas-Alfonso, Ordanes, Cajayon-Uy, Suan, Cuaresma, Dagooc, Lee, Verzosa, Macapagal-Arroyo, Luistro, Cua, Alvarez (J.), Salo, Reyes, Campos, Collantes, Aquino-Magsaysay, Ang, Gutierrez, Paduano, Salimbangon, Lacson-Noel, Pumaren, Noel, Suansing (H.), Recto, Barbers, Tambunting, Chungalao, Teves (J.), Mendoza, Calderon, Vergara, Tan (S.J.), Tan (R.M.), Panotes, Bolilia, Alvarez (M.), Nograles (M.), Legarda, Domingo, Unabia, Sacdalan, Horibata and Marquez

### AN ACT

ESTABLISHING THE BULACAN AIRPORT CITY
SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT IN THE PROVINCE OF
BULACAN, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE BULACAN AIRPORT
CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT AUTHORITY,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

### CHAPTER 1

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is declared the policy of the State to encourage, promote, and accelerate the sound and balanced industrial, economic and social development of the country. The establishment of a strategically-located, master-planned, and value-creation-oriented special economic zone shall attract legitimate and productive foreign investments that generate employment and increase productivity and individual, as well as family incomes, thereby enhancing the quality of life of the Filipino people.

### CHAPTER II

### CREATION OF THE ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT

SEC. 3. Creation of the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport. – In accordance with the foregoing declared State policy, there is hereby established a Special Economic Zone and Freeport, hereinafter referred to as the "Bulacan Ecozone."

### The Bulacan Ecozone shall cover:

- (a) the Airport Project and the Airport City Project, as defined under, and to be developed pursuant to Sections 1 and 6 of Republic Act (RA) No. 11506, otherwise known as "An Act Granting San Miguel Aerocity Inc. A Franchise to Construct, Develop, Establish, Operate and Maintain a Domestic and International Airport in the Municipality of Bulakan, Province of Bulacan, and to Construct, Develop, Establish, Operate, and Maintain an Adjacent Airport City," respectively;
- (b) the remaining land territories of the cities of Malolos and Meycauayan, and of the municipalities of Bulakan, Paombong, Guiguinto, Balagtas, Bocaue, Marilao, Obando, and Sta. Maria, in the Province of Bulacan, that are not yet included as component parts of the Airport Project and the Airport City Project; and
  - (c) all other expansion areas or municipalities, whose metes and bounds shall be clearly defined through a Presidential Proclamation, within the Province of Bulacan and surrounding areas which may be declared as part of the Bulacan Ecozone in compliance with Section 7(e) of this Act.
  - SEC. 4. Creation of the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority. There is hereby created a body corporate to be known as the "Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport Authority," hereinafter referred to as the BACSEZFA, which shall manage and operate the Bulacan Ecozone, in accordance with the provisions of this Act: Provided, That the management and operations of any existing PEZA-supervised economic zones in the Bulacan Ecozone shall remain with PEZA: Provided, further, That existing PEZA-registered locators within the Bulacan Ecozone shall have the option to register with PEZA or the BACSEZFA: Provided, finally, That the management and operations of the Airport Project and the Airport City Project shall be in accordance with RA 11506.
- It shall be organized within one hundred eighty (180) days upon the effectivity of this Act.
  - SEC. 5. Land Use, Planning, and Development. Any provision of existing laws, ordinances, executive orders, rules or regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, lands located in Barangay San Nicolas in the Municipality of Bulakan, in Barangay Ubihan and Barangay Liputan, in the City of Meycauayan,

in Barangay Abangan Norte, Barangay Abangan Sur, and Barangay Nagbalon, in the Municipality of Marilao, and in Barangay Salambao, Barangay Binuangan, Barangay Tawiran, Barangay Paco, Barangay Lawa, Barangay San Pascual, Barangay Paliwas, Barangay Pag-Asa (Poblacion), Barangay Catanghalan, Barangay Panghulo, in the Municipality of Obando, are hereby declared as alienable and disposable, and may be used for industrial, commercial, or other lawful uses.

 To ensure the efficient and sustainable development of areas covered, and proper inter-local development and coordination, the BACSEZFA shall establish the general framework for land use, planning, and development for the area covered by the Bulacan Ecozone. The framework shall abide by the following principles:

(a) The general framework shall maintain an optimal balance between economic maximization and ecological protection;

(b) The framework shall provide for the development of necessary transport, sanitation, waste management, flood control, and support infrastructure; and

(c) The framework shall include criteria for the designation or subdivision of the area covered into various zones for commercial, industrial, residential, or other uses;

The BACSEZFA shall establish under it a land use, planning, and development office or unit to craft, revise, and implement the framework.

Local, regional, and national plans for the uses and development of the areas covered by the Bulacan Ecozone shall be consistent with the framework established by the BACSEZFA. The BACSEZFA shall also be involved in the crafting of local, regional, and national land use, zoning, and development plans which partially or fully cover the area of the Bulacan Ecozone, or which cover means of access to the Bulacan Ecozone.

- SEC. 6. Registration with the BACSEZFA. Prospective locators within the Bulacan Ecozone may register with the BACSEZFA and qualify for business incentives in accordance with RA 11534 or the CREATE law: Provided, That the Airport Project and the Airport City Project shall remain covered by RA 11506, including the incentives and regulatory regime provided therefor.
- 37 SEC. 7. Governing Principles. The BACSEZFA, created under 38 Section 4 of this Act, shall manage and operate the Bulacan Ecozone under the 39 following principles:
  - (a) Within the framework and limitations of the Constitution and applicable provisions of RA 7160, or the "Local Government Code of 1991," as amended, the

Bulacan Ecozone shall be developed into and operated as a decentralized, self-reliant and self-sustaining aviation hub, industrial, commercial, trading, agro-industrial, tourism, retirement, banking, financial and investment center, emerging and future technologies, with suitable residential areas;

- (b) Notwithstanding the autonomy provided in Section 7(a) of this Act, the Bulacan Ecozone may continue to be provided by the National Government (NG) government and shall be equipped withtransportation, telecommunications, and other facilities needed to attract legitimate and investments, generate linkage industries and employment opportunities for the people of the Province of Bulacan, and its neighboring towns and cities: Provided, That the development of the Bulacan Ecozone shall be integrated and consistent with the plans of the National Government Agencies (NGAs), Regional Development Council (RDC), and LGUs with respect to transportation, telecommunications infrastructure and other facilities: Provided, further, That access to the Bulacan Ecozone shall be incorporated in the planning, construction, and operation of such infrastructure or expansions;
- (c) The Bulacan Ecozone may establish mutually beneficial economic relations with other entities or enterprises within the country or, subject to the administrative guidance of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), with foreign entities or enterprises;
- (d) Subject to existing laws, rules and regulations, foreign citizens and companies owned by non-Filipinos may set up enterprises in the Bulacan Ecozone, either by themselves or in a joint venture with Filipinos in any sector of industry, international trade and commerce within the Bulacan Ecozone;
- (e) The areas comprising the Bulacan Ecozone may be expanded or reduced when necessary through a presidential proclamation with the concurrence through local legislation by the concerned LGU;
- (f) Goods manufactured by a Bulacan Ecozone enterprise shall be made available for immediate retail sale in the domestic market, subject to the payment of corresponding taxes on raw materials and other regulations that may be formulated by the BACSEZFA, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the DTI. However, in order to protect domestic industries, a Negative List of industries shall be drawn up and regularly updated by the Interagency Investment Promotion Coordination Committee (IIPCC), pursuant to RA 7042, or the "Foreign Investments Act of 1991," as amended, and other relevant laws, rules, and regulations. Enterprises engaged in industries included in such Negative List shall not be allowed to sell their products locally; and
- (g) The defense of the Bulacan Ecozone and the security of its perimeter, peace and order, firefighting and disaster response, shall be the responsibility of the NG in cooperation with the BACSEZFA and the LGUs: *Provided*, That, for the costs of securing the Bulacan Ecozone, the Office of the President (OP) shall, upon

the recommendation of the Department of Finance (DOF), establish a cost-sharing scheme between the BACSEZFA and the relevant NGAs.

### SEC. 8. Separate Customs Territory. -

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- (a) The lands that shall comprise the New Manila International Airport and the adjacent Airport City, and the right-of-way thereto, are hereby declared and shall be managed and operated as a separate customs territory, thereby ensuring the free flow or movement of goods and capital within, into, and out of the territory.
- (b) The covered areas under Section 3 of this Act, but which have not been covered by paragraph (a) of this Section shall also be declared, managed, and operated as part of the separate customs territory declared under paragraph (a) to the extent that customs enforcement and border protection can be ensured. The BACSEZFA and the BOC shall set up the necessary infrastructure, border protection, and security measures and arrangements to ensure customs enforcement and border protection within and around the Bulacan Ecozone.

The BACSEZFA may likewise provide incentives such as tax and duty-free importations of raw materials, capital, and equipment to qualified registered enterprises located therein. However, exportation or removal of goods from the territory of the Bulacan Ecozone to the other parts of the Philippine territory shall be subject to customs duties under RA 10863, or the "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act" and other relevant tax laws of the Philippines.

The BOC shall continue to exercise border protection and customs control authority over the customs territory outside the Bulacan Ecozone: *Provided*, That the BACSEZFA shall allow patrol or other law enforcement arrangements by the BOC and other government agencies within the municipal waters covered by the Bulacan Ecozone subject to coordination with the BACSEZFA to enhance its protection and control capacity and ensure compliance with customs, fisheries, and other laws and regulations.

- SEC. 9. Development Goals of the Bulacan Ecozone. The BACSEZFA shall include in its development goals for the Bulacan Ecozone the construction and operation of a domestic and international airport and allied businesses within the framework of national development plans, policies and goals. The Administrator shall, upon approval by the Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA, submit the Bulacan Ecozone plans, programs and projects to the RDC for inclusion and inputs to the overall regional development plan.
- SEC. 10. Capitalization. The BACSEZFA shall have an authorized capital stock of two billion (2,000,000,000.00) no par shares at a minimum issue of Ten Pesos (P10.00) each, the majority shares of which shall be subscribed and paid for by the National Government and the local government units (LGUs) embracing the Bulacan Ecozone. The Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA may, with the written concurrence of the Secretary of Finance, sell shares representing not more than Twenty Per Centum (20%) of the capital stock of the BACSEZFA to the general public under such policy as the

Board and the Secretary of Finance may determine. The National Government and the LGUs shall in no case own less than sixty per centum (60%) of the total issued and outstanding capital of the BACSEZFA. The amount necessary to subscribe and pay for the shares of the National Government to the capital stock of the BACSEZFA shall be included in the General Appropriations Act. For the LGUs concerned, the funds shall be taken from their National Tax Allotment and other local funds.

- SEC. 11. Revenue Sharing. To ensure sufficient funds, BACSEZFA and the affected LGUs shall be entitled to a share in the special corporate income tax (SCIT) or corporate income tax under the Enhanced Deduction regime under Title XIII of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended, from all registered business enterprises registered with the BACSEZFA. For this matter, the said corporate income tax collected shall be divided as follows:
- (a) Forty percent (40%) to the NG, and which shall be directly remitted to the NG: *Provided*, That the revenue sharing under this Section shall be considered compliance with Section 284 of the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended, and shall no longer be further divided for purposes of the National Tax Allotment;
- (b) Twenty percent (20%) to the BACSEZFA, earmarked for infrastructure development projects of the BACSEZFA as determined by its Board of Directors, consistent with the principles and purposes of this Act; and
- (c) Forty percent (40%) to the concerned local government: *Provided*, That the local government share from revenues derived from BACSEZFA-registered locators who availed of incentives under RA 11534, or the "Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act", in component cities or municipalities shall be allocated among the LGUs of the Bulacan Ecozone using the formula prescribed under Section 285 of the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended.
- The share of the NG shall be paid by the locator directly to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). The share of the LGUs and the BACSEZFA shall be collected by the latter. The BACSEZFA shall remit the local government share on a quarterly basis.
- The utilization shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA. The share of the LGUs shall be utilized for the construction of infrastructure projects within its area of responsibility, with utilization reports submitted to the BACSEZFA two (2) weeks after the end of each quarter and before their share to said taxes are released and subject to audit by the Commission on Audit (COA).
- SEC. 12. Principal Office of the BACSEZFA. The BACSEZFA shall maintain its principal office at the Airport City, but it may establish liaison offices within the Philippines as may be necessary for the proper conduct of its business.
- SEC. 13. Powers and Functions of the BACSEZFA. The BACSEZFA shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Operate, administer, manage and develop the Bulacan Ecozone according to the principles and provisions set forth in this Act: *Provided*, That the management and operations of the Airport Project and the Airport City Project shall be in accordance with RA 11506;

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- (b) Register, regulate and supervise the enterprises in the Bulacan Ecozone in an efficient and decentralized manner, subject to existing laws;
- (c) Coordinate with LGUs and exercise general supervision over the development plans, activities and operations of the Bulacan Ecozone; and adopt, prepare, and implement a comprehensive and detailed development plan embodying a list of projects for the sound and balanced conversion of the Bulacan Ecozone consistent with ecological and environmental standards, proper waste management practices, effective flood control and management, mandatory water impoundment, and other productive uses to promote the economic and social development of the Municipality of Bulakan and its extensions in particular and the country in general;
- (d) Undertake the establishment, construction, operation and maintenance of public utilities, other services, and infrastructure in the Bulacan Ecozone such as light and power, shipping, barging, stevedoring, cargo handling, hauling, warehousing, storage of cargo, port services or concessions, piers, wharves, bulkheads, bulk terminals, mooring areas, storage areas, roads, telecommunications, transport, bridges, terminals, conveyors, water supply and storage, sewerage, and drainage: *Provided*, That such shall be in compliance and coordination with the rules and regulations of the concerned departments and agencies;
- (e) Construct, acquire, own, lease, operate and maintain on its own or through contracts, franchise, licenses, bulk purchase from the private sector or permits under any of the schemes allowed in RA 6957, or the "Build-Operate-Transfer Law," as amended, or joint venture, adequate facilities and infrastructure required or needed for the operation and development of the Bulacan Ecozone, in coordination with appropriate national and local government authorities and in conformity with applicable laws thereon;
- (f) Approve plans, programs and projects of the Bulacan Ecozone, to be submitted to the RDC for inclusion and inputs to the overall regional development plan;
- (g) Operate on its own, either directly or through licenses to others, tourism-related activities, including games, amusements, recreational and sports facilities; Provided, That any and all businesses that host games of chance and/or accept bets for monetary rewards, or any gambling or gaming-related activity that falls under the mandate of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) or otherwise, including but not limited to, animal fighting and racing, numbers games and small-town lotteries, casinos, slot machines or bingo parlors, and games that involve cards, roulette and dice, sports betting, offshore gaming operations, or any activities that support gaming or gambling, even if the same is

regulated or licensed or allowed by Philippine laws cannot be registered with the BACSEZFA;

- (h) Raise or borrow, within the limitation provided by law, and subject to the approval of the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), as the case may be, adequate and necessary funds from local or foreign sources, to finance its projects and programs under this Act and for this purpose, to issue bonds, promissory notes and other forms of securities, and to secure the same by a guarantee, pledge, mortgage, deed of trust or an assignment of all or part of its property or assets;
- (i) Protect, preserve, maintain, and develop the forests, beaches, coral and coral reefs, and maintain ecological balance within the Bulacan Ecozone. The rules and regulations of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other government agencies involved in the above functions shall be implemented by the BACSEZFA;
- (j) Create, operate or contract to operate such functional units or offices of the BACSEZFA as it may deem necessary;
- (k) Adopt, alter and use a corporate seal; contract, lease, buy, acquire, own or otherwise dispose of personal and/or real property of whatever nature; sue and be sued; and otherwise carry out its functions and duties as provided for in this Act;
- (l) Issue certificates of origin for products manufactured or processed in the Bulacan Ecozone in accordance with prevailing rules of origin and the pertinent regulations of the PEZA, the DTI and the DOF;
- (m) Establish one-stop shops for the issuance of all necessary permits, clearances, licenses, and other similar certifications to conduct such activities intended to improve the ease of doing business within the Bulacan Ecozone, in coordination with government agencies having jurisdiction over activities therein: *Provided*, That all government agencies are directed to provide and extend utmost and full cooperation to the Bulacan Ecozone in the establishment of such one-stop shops;
- (n) Provide internal security to the Bulacan Ecozone in coordination with the NG and affected LGU. For this purpose, the BACSEZFA shall provide and establish its own internal security and firefighting forces or hire others to provide the same. Military forces to be assigned by the NG for national defense purposes shall not interfere in the internal affairs of the Bulacan Ecozone and expenditures for these military forces shall be borne by the NG;
- (o) Exercise such powers, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, as may be essential, necessary or incidental to the powers granted to it hereunder, including imposition of necessary fees and penalties, that shall enable it to carry out, implement and accomplish the purposes, objectives and policies of this Act; and

- 1 (p) Issue rules and regulations within the exercise of its powers under this 2 Section, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.
  - SEC. 14. Board of Directors of the BACSEZFA. The powers of the BACSEZFA shall be vested in and exercised by a Board of Directors, composed of eleven (11) members, hereinafter referred to as the Board, which shall be composed of the following:
- 7 (a) The Chairperson of the BACSEZFA, who shall be elected from among 8 the Members of the Board;
  - (b) The Administrator of the BACSEZFA, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines and shall serve as the Vice-Chairperson;
    - (c) Members consisting of:

- (1) A designated representative from the OP;
- (2) The Secretary or a designated representative of the DOF;
- (3) The Secretary or a designated representative of the DTI;
- (4) The Secretary or a designated representative of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
- (5) The Governor, or a designated representative, of the Province of Bulacan;
- (6) The designated representative of the mayors of the cities and municipalities covering the Bulacan Ecozone, to be elected from among themselves.
- (7) The Chairperson or a designated representative of the Regional Development Council of Central Luzon.
- (8) One (1) independent director representing the private sector who has at least ten (10) years' experience in the following areas: business, trade, port and logistics operations, and freeport or economic zone operations;
- (9) One (1) representative from the workers in the Bulacan Ecozone; and
- (10) One (1) independent director representing the Airport Project and Airport City Project.

The Administrator and the members of the Board shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines to serve for a term of six (6) years, unless sooner separated from service due to death, voluntary resignation or removal for cause. In case of death, resignation or removal for cause, their replacements shall serve only the unexpired portion of the respective terms.

No person shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines as a member of the Board unless one is a Filipino citizen, of good moral character, of proven probity and integrity, and a degree-holder in any of the following fields: economics, business, public administration, law, management or their equivalent,

- and with at least ten (10) years relevant working experience preferably in the field of management or public administration.
- All benefits and emoluments of the members of the Board shall be subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, including those prescribed by the Government Commission for Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations.
- SEC. 15. Organization and Personnel. The Board shall provide for its organization and staff. The Board shall appoint and fix the remuneration and other emoluments of its officers and employees in accordance with existing laws on compensation and position classification. The Board shall have exclusive and final authority to promote, transfer, assign, reassign, or remove officers of the BACSEZFA, any provision of existing law to the contrary notwithstanding. The Administrator shall execute the decisions of the Board.
- The officers and employees of the BACSEZFA, including all members of the Board, shall not engage directly or indirectly in partisan political activities nor take part in any election, except to vote.
- No officer or employee of the BACSEZFA, subject to civil service laws and regulations, shall be removed or suspended except for cause, as provided by Civil Service Law and Regulations.
- 19 **SEC. 16.** Powers and Duties of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall 20 have the following powers and duties:
- 21 (a) Direct and manage the affairs of the BACSEZFA in accordance with the policies of the Board;
- 23 (b) Preside at all meetings of the Board;

- (c) Ensure that all policies, directives, plans, and programs formulated by the
   Board are faithfully carried out by the Administrator as Chief Executive Officer of
   BACSEZFA; and
- 27 (d) Exercise such powers and perform such functions and duties as the 28 President may direct, or as may be assigned to him by the BACSEZFA.
- SEC. 17. Powers and Duties of the Administrator. The Administrator shall have the following powers and duties:
  - (a) Act as Chief Executive Officer of the BACSEZFA;
- 32 (b) Establish the internal organization of the BACSEZFA under such 33 conditions that the Board may prescribe;
- 34 (c) Submit an annual budget and necessary supplemental budget to the 35 Board for its approval;

- (d) Submit within thirty (30) days after the close of each fiscal year an annual 1 2 report to the Board and such other reports as may be required;
- (e) Submit to the Board for its approval, policies, systems, procedures, rules 3 4 and regulations that are essential to the operation of the Bulacan Ecozone:
- (f) Execute, administer, and implement the policies and measures approved 5 6 and adopted by the Board;
- 7 (g) Directly administer and supervise the operations and day-to-day business 8 activities of the BACSEZFA:
- (h) Represent the BACSEZFA in all dealings with offices, agencies, and 9 instrumentalities of the government and with all persons and entities, public or 10 private, domestic or foreign, unless otherwise directed by the President or by 11 12 the Board;
- (i) Execute, on behalf of the BACSEZFA, all contracts, agreements, and other instruments affecting the interests of the BACSEZFA duly approved by the Board; 14

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- 15 (j) Direct and supervise the preparation of the agenda for the meetings of 16 the Board;
  - (k) Preside at the meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairperson;
- (l) Recommend to the Board the remuneration and other emoluments of its 18 19 officers and employees in accordance with existing laws on compensation and position classification; 20
- 21 (m) Create a mechanism in coordination with relevant agencies for the promotion of industrial peace, the protection of the environment, and the 22 advancement of the quality of life in the Bulacan Ecozone; and 23
  - (n) Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board or which are necessary or incidental to the office.
  - SEC. 18. Legal Counsel. The BACSEZFA shall have its own internal legal counsel under the supervision of the government corporate counsel. When the exigencies of its businesses and operations demand it, the BACSEZFA may engage the services of an outside counsel either on a case to case or on a fixed retainer basis.

#### 31 CHAPTER III INCENTIVES TO ECOZONE ENTERPRISES/INVESTORS 32

SEC. 19. Investors and other Special Visas. - Foreign nationals who either intend to invest in the Bulacan Ecozone or possess highly specialized skills

can apply for a special resident visa in the Bulacan Ecozone. The special resident visa shall be of two types: (a) The investor's visa; and (b) the special skills visa.

(a) Special skills visa. – The BACSEZFA shall identify the highly specialized skills deemed necessary or strategic for the development of the Bulacan Ecozone. Managers and highly technical personnel required for the operation of the enterprises registered with the BACSEZFA shall also qualify for the special skills visa. Applications for the special skills visa shall be sponsored by registered business enterprises that require the expertise of the applicants.

Foreign nationals who may serve as faculty members of Bulacan State University campuses and other government and private higher educational institutions within the Bulacan Ecozone shall also be eligible for the special resident visa subject to the rule on reciprocity. The educational institution, with concurrence from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), shall sponsor the application of the applicant. The CHED shall promulgate the guidelines and eligibility requirements for applicants for the special skills visa who shall be faculty members of educational institutions in the Bulacan Ecozone.

The BACSEZFA and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) shall formulate the necessary guidelines for the submission and approval of applications, as well as the monitoring of visa grantees under this paragraph.

- (b) *Investors Visa.* Any foreign national who invests an amount of one hundred fifty thousand US dollars (US\$ 150,000.00), either in cash and/or equipment, in a BACSEZFA-registered enterprise shall be entitled to an investor's visa to be issued by the Bureau of Immigration subject to the recommendation of the BACSEZFA and the endorsement of the Board of Investments: *Provided*, That the foreign national:
- (a) Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age;

- 28 (b) Must not have been convicted by final judgment of a crime involving moral turpitude;
  - (c) Must not be afflicted with any loathsome, dangerous or contagious disease;
- 31 (d) Must not have been confined in an institution for any mental disorder or 32 disability; and
- 33 (e) Must be financially capable as borne out by credible and verifiable 34 evidence.

A foreign national shall be granted permanent resident status within the territorial coverage of the Bulacan Ecozone while the investment subsists. To prove this, the foreign national should submit an annual report in the form duly prescribed for the purpose. Should said investments be withdrawn from the

Philippines, the investor's visa issued to said foreign national shall automatically expire or be withdrawn. The BACSEZFA may also recommend to the BI the grant of visas providing more favorable terms of residency to a foreign national who meets the criteria under this Section.

A foreign national, not categorized as "restricted" as determined by the DFA, visiting the Bulacan Ecozone for business and/or tourism purposes may be allowed to enter all ports of entry in the Bulacan Ecozone and stay therein without visa for a maximum period of ninety (90) days: *Provided*, That, upon arrival, they present their passports, Certificates of Identity or travel documents valid for at least six (6) months beyond the intended stay in the Bulacan Ecozone and confirmed onward flight or marine vessel tickets through the same port used as port of entry in the Bulacan Ecozone. The determination of the identity and admissibility of the foreign national seeking to enter the Bulacan Ecozone shall be the primary responsibility of the BI.

Foreign nationals who enter visa-free as mentioned above shall leave or depart from the Philippines only through the New Manila International Airport or Seaport.

The DFA, BI, and BACSEZFA, in consultation with the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, shall ensure that there will be no detriment to national security in the implementation of this visa free provision. The authority to issue visas and work permits shall remain with the BI and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), respectively: *Provided*, That the BI and the DOLE shall implement measures to expedite the processing of such visas and permits for workers in the Bulacan Ecozone and coordinate with the BACSEZFA for the purpose of improving ease of doing business.

SEC. 20. Fiscal Incentives. – Registered enterprises operating within the Bulacan Ecozone may apply for pertinent fiscal incentives granted under Title XIII of the NIRC of 1997, as amended, and for such other fiscal incentives as may be provided by law: *Provided*, That the grant of fiscal incentives shall be subject to Section 292 of the NIRC of 1997, as amended.

SEC. 21. Administration, Implementation and Monitoring of Incentives. — In the interest of enhancing transparency in the management and accounting of tax incentives in the Bulacan Ecozone, and ensuring the proper administration, management, enforcement, implementation and monitoring of tax incentives, the BACSEZFA shall comply with the provisions of RA 11534, otherwise known as the "Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act," and its implementing rules and regulations; and other rules, regulations, and issuances made by the Fiscal Incentives Review Board, pursuant to Chapter III, Title XIII of the NIRC of 1997, as amended.

The BOC shall set up and establish a customs-controlled area outside the premises of the Bulacan Ecozone to facilitate payment of duties and taxes on goods entering the Philippine customs territory: *Provided*, That notwithstanding the limitations on this Act, the BACSEZFA and BOC may coordinate and jointly implement measures on border protection.

- SEC. 22. Banking Rules and Regulations. Banks and financial institutions to be established in the Bulacan Ecozone shall be under the supervision of the BSP and subject to existing banking laws, rules and regulations.
- SEC. 23. Remittances. In the case of foreign investments, a duly registered entity or enterprise within the Bulacan Ecozone shall have the right to remit earnings from the investment in the currency in which the investment was originally made and at the exchange rate prevailing at the time of remittance, subject to the provisions of RA 7653, or "The New Central Bank Act" as amended, and other relevant laws, rules, and regulations.

### CHAPTER IV NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ENTITIES

- **SEC. 24.** Supervision and Control. For purposes of policy direction and coordination, the BACSEZFA shall be under the direct supervision and control of the OP of the Philippines: *Provided*, That the grant of fiscal incentives shall be subject to the provisions of Title XIII of the NIRC of 1997, as amended.
- SEC. 25. Relationship with Local Government Units and the National Government. Except as herein provided, the LGUs comprising the Bulacan Ecozone shall retain their basic autonomy and identity. The concerned LGUs shall operate and function in accordance with the framework of the Constitution, the Local Government Code of 1991, and this Act.
- Subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, in case of conflict among the BACSEZFA and the LGUs on matters directly and inextricably affecting the Bulacan Ecozone, other than taxation, national defense, and security matters, the decision of the BACSEZFA shall prevail. In case of any conflict between an NGA within the Executive Branch and the BACSEZFA on matters directly and inextricably affecting the Bulacan Ecozone, other than taxation, national defense, or security, the decision of the OP shall prevail.
- SEC. 26. Audit. The COA shall appoint a full-time auditor in the BACSEZFA or may assign such number of personnel as may be necessary in the performance of their functions. The BACSEZFA shall be subject to the audit mechanisms under Sections 24, 25, and 26 of RA 10149 or the "GOCC Governance Act of 2011." The BACSEZFA shall not be exempt from relevant laws, rules, and regulations on evaluation by the COA.

### CHAPTER V MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- SEC. 27. Appropriations. The amount necessary to subscribe and pay for the shares of the national government to the capital stock of the BACSEZFA shall be included in the General Appropriations Act. For the LGUs concerned, the funds shall be taken from their national tax allotment and other local funds.
- SEC. 28. Interpretation and Construction. The powers, authorities and functions that are vested in the BACSEZFA are intended to establish national self-sufficiency and self-reliance in the advancement of and protection of national integrity, enhancement of national security, decentralization of governmental functions and authority, and promote an efficient and effective working relationship among the BACSEZFA, the NG and the LGUs. Any interpretation of this Act shall consider such intentions. In the event of conflict of interpretation and provided the intentions cannot be harmonized, the provisions of this Act shall be construed in favor of an interpretation that would tend to protect national security.
- SEC. 29. Applicability Clause. Insofar as these are consistent with the provisions of this Act, the provisions of Sections 30 to 41 of Republic Act No. 7916 or "The Special Economic Zone Act of 1995" shall likewise apply to the Bulacan Ecozone.
- SEC. 30. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The DTI shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act, in consultation with DOF, NEDA, the Province of Bulacan, and a representative from the Airport Project and the Airport City Project within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act. Such rules and regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after their publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.
- SEC. 31. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.
- SEC. 32. Repealing Clause. All laws, executive orders or issuances or any part thereof, which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.
  - **SEC. 33.** *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,