

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10969, February 02, 2018]

**AN ACT PROVIDING FREE IRRIGATION SERVICE, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3601, AS AMENDED,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Free Irrigation Service Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote comprehensive rural development, food self-sufficiency, equitable access to opportunities and sustained productivity as key strategies to raise the quality of life in rural areas and attain overall national development.

The State shall also ensure that vital support services are made available, particularly irrigation service, through the continued construction, repair and maintenance of necessary irrigation facilities, to increase production of agricultural crops, encourage productivity, and increase the incomes of farmers.

Towards this end, the State affirms its commitment to contribute to the lowering of the cost of production through the provision of free irrigation service, and further relieve the farmers and their irrigators associations from the burden and consequence of unpaid irrigation service fees.

SEC. 3. *Scope of Free Irrigation Service.* - Upon the effectivity of this Act, all farmers with landholdings of eight (8) hectares and below are hereby exempted from paying irrigation service fees (ISF) for water derived from national irrigation systems (NIS) and communal irrigation systems (CIS) that were, or are to be, funded, constructed, maintained and administered by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and other government agencies, including those that have been turned over to irrigators associations (IAs).

Farmers with more than eight (8) hectares of land, corporate farms, and plantations drawing water for agricultural crop production; and fishponds and other persons, natural or juridical, drawing water for nonagricultural purposes from NIS and CIS, or using the irrigationsystems as drainage facilities, shall continue to be subject to the payment of ISF.

SEC. 4. *Condonation and Writing Off of Loans, Past Due Accounts and, Penalties of Farmers and Irrigators Associations.* - To achieve the objectives of this Act, all unpaid ISF and the corresponding penalties of farmers with eight (8) hectares and below to NIA, and all loans, past due accounts and the corresponding interests and penalties of IAs to NIA, are hereby condoned and written off from the books of NIA.