

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HB No. **412**



Introduced by Rep. Roseller L. Barinaga

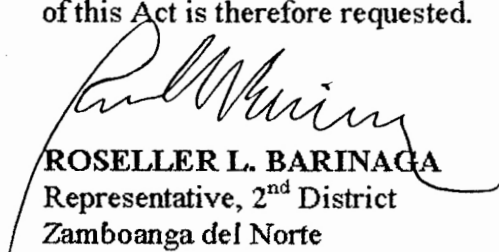
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our forest are being denuded at a very alarming rate. Unless checked seasonably by the Government, the Philippines will soon desertify.

Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao all suffer from indiscriminate logging operations. Being an extractive industry, logging destroys forests resources faster than nature's regenerative ability to restore or maintain ecological balance. Loggers make roads by cutting and bulldozing swaths through our jungles. In the process, they drag these cut trees destroying undergrowth, saplings and other vegetation. Our forest are at the mercy of those who rape the environment by engaging in illegal logging activities to satisfy selfish commercial motives. This revolting practice is abetted by some government officials who are supposed to lead the crusade to protect the environment. Worse, a big portion of funds earmarked for the reforestation program of the government go to the pockets of unscrupulous individuals. We recently witnessed the flashfloods that hit Mindanao causing great suffering to many of our countrymen. The *elimination of our forest cover has caused the erosion of the area's fragile topsoil destroying rich agricultural land and even fishing grounds.* The siltation of riverbeds, irrigation canals and estuaries eventually follows. This destroys the marine ecosystem when coral reefs are covered by situation caused by soil erosions. These misfortunes would have been avoided had the forests been protected from illegal logging.

It order to save our remaining forests and to ensure the successful reforestation of the badly denuded areas, Congress should impose a total log ban in forests, timberland, forest reserves and watersheds for the next twenty five (25) years.

In view of the urgent need to stop the rapid deforestation of our forests, the immediate approval of this Act is therefore requested.


ROSELLER L. BARINAGA
Representative, 2nd District
Zamboanga del Norte

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AN ACT
TOTALLY BANNING LOGGING OPERATIONS FOR THE NEXT 25 YEARS

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of State Policy. It is hereby declared a Policy of the state to prohibit logging operations of any kind in any forest, timber land, forest reserve or watershed for the next twenty five (25) years.

SEC. 2. Prohibited Acts. It shall be unlawful for any person to cut, fell or destroy any tree standing on any forest, timber land, forest reserve or watershed within the next twenty five (25) years from the approval of this Act. This prohibition shall not apply to trees grown in legitimate commercial tree farms.

SEC. 3. Penalties. Any person who violates this Act shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five (5) years but not more than ten (10) years.

Any juridical entity that violates this Act shall forfeit its license or permit to do business in the Philippines. In addition, it shall be made to pay a fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand (P 500,000.00) Pesos but not more than Five Million (P 5,000,000.00) Pesos of the discretion of the court. The Chairman and/or the Chief Executive Officer or any other officer of the company responsible for the violation of this law shall be imprisoned for a period of not less than five (5) years but not more than ten (10) years also at the discretion of the court. Aliens who violate this law shall be deported after their sentences shall have been served.

SEC. 4. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect upon its publication in at least, two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved.