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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 697

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tourism plays a vital role in nation-building. Its contributions to the nation's economy include foreign currency earnings and employment generation.

While the national government has been quite successful in generating interest for both foreign and local tourists, the promotional programs have been largely confined with the Department of Tourism (DOT). Considering the diversity of the cultures and topography of our archipelago, the DOT needs support in developing the vast potential of tourism to a level where the country may derive optimum benefits.

There is a need to lay down integrated and coordinated policies, plans and strategies to the local government units. The LGU's familiarity with their respective intrinsic character and charm will be ideal in achieving the goal towards the fullest development of the domestic tourism sector in the country.

It is on this premise that the undersigned is proposing the creation of the position of tourism officer in every province, city and municipality in the country, particularly in identified and budding tourist destinations. Tourism officers would be central to the innovation of tourism plans and programs in the local government unit. They would largely contribute not only to development of the nation's tourism sector but also enhance our appreciation of the diverse cultures and the hidden natural treasures of the Philippines.

With the foregoing, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.

JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

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AN ACT
CREATING THE POSITION OF TOURISM OFFICER FOR EVERY PROVINCE, CITY AND MUNICIPALITY IN THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. The position of tourism officer is hereby created for every province, city and municipality in the Philippines. The position of tourism officer shall be mandatory for all provinces, cities and municipalities that are identified by the Department of Tourism as tourist areas.

SEC. 2. *Qualifications, powers and duties.* – (a) No person shall be appointed tourism officer unless he is a citizen of the Philippines, preferably a resident of the local government unit concerned, of good moral character, a holder of a college degree preferably on tourism, mass communications or any related course from a recognized college or university, and a first grade civil service eligible or its equivalent. He must have experience in tourism promotion for at least three (3) years in the case of the provincial or city tourism officer, and one (1) year in the case of the municipal tourism officer.

The appointment of the tourism officer is optional for provinces, cities and municipalities not considered as tourist areas.

The term of the tourism officer is coterminous with that of his appointing authority.

(b) The tourism officer shall take charge of the office on tourism affairs and shall:
(1) Formulate measures for the consideration of the sanggunian and provide technical assistance and support to the governor or mayor, as the case may be, in providing the information and research data required for the promotion of local tourism;
(2) Develop plans, innovative approaches and strategies designed to promote and upgrade the technical capabilities of local governments and, upon approval thereof by the governor or mayor, as the case may be, implement the same, particularly those which have to do with tourism standards, tourism promotion, tourism information and tourism development;
(3) Advise the governor or mayor on the efficient enforcement and implementation of tourism related laws and regulations to ensure public awareness and safety of tourists;
(4) Furnish tourism information and data to other local government units or government agencies or offices or non-governmental organizations as may be required by law or ordinance;

(5) Maintain effective liaison with the various sectors of the community on matters and issues that affect the tourism activities and encourage public sector support on tourism programs;
(6) Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

SEC. 3. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of other provisions thereof.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,