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

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1345

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill aims to encourage domestic tourism not only to continue to the viability of the local tourism sector but also to promote tourism awareness and increase the appreciation for our local culture and heritage.

It is an unfortunate reality that majority of Filipinos have not been able to fully appreciate the country's rich culture and natural beauty, much more visit the Philippines' vaunted 7,107 islands. Thus, it is not surprising to hear of misconceptions due to regional differences. Furthermore, most Filipinos have to contend with pictures of Boracay, Camiguin, Palawan, Puerto Galera and other similar tourist destinations that are frequented by foreigners.

The difficulty for domestic tourism largely lies on the expense that is involved when one travels even within the country. A case in point would be that, the transportation cost from Manila to Davao is almost the same as the transportation cost from Manila to HongKong. With people not knowing what to expect in Davao, they would rather opt for HongKong. Add to this the cost of accommodation, then the more people would become discouraged to go on vacation.

It is on this premise that the undersigned is proposing the grant of incentives for local tourists. In order to increase enthusiasm for domestic tourism, the measure proposes the grant of incentives, such as discounts on transportation, accommodation and meal expenses, to domestic tourists. It also proposes that the Department of Tourism, in coordination with the industry stakeholders, to come up with tour packages that are designed for particular sectors such as students, senior citizens, married couples, families and the like.

For the past few years, tourism incentive legislation has been largely focused on "balik-bayans". It is believed that it is about time that the industry gives some of its attention to the domestic tourism sector.

While beneficial to all Filipinos, the proposed measure particularly aims to encourage domestic tourism activity among the country's middle and lower economic brackets. These sub-sections in our population are among the highest, and are largely untapped sectors. The measure aspires not only to increase the industry's contribution to the country's socio-economic activity; it would also be a vehicle for the Filipinos to regain awareness of our nation's rich culture, heritage and history.

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

JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

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AN ACT
GRANTING INCENTIVES TO FILIPINOS WHO WILL TRAVEL TO DOMESTIC TOURIST DESTINATIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. **Title**. This Act shall be known as the "Local Travel Incentives Act".

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy**. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

a) Encourage activities and programs that will promote tourism awareness;
b) Enhance the continued viability of our local travel industry and tour-operation industry;
c) Develop eco-tourism and promote the intrinsic attractions of our various tourist destinations; and
d) Encourage the active participation of its citizenry in promoting the Philippines, exploring new local environs, understanding our culture and values, and patronizing our local tourism industry.

SEC. 3. **Persons Qualified for the Incentives**. Only Filipino citizens can avail of this incentive package.

Persons who wish to avail of the incentives of this Act must present valid identification cards to participating establishments and agencies for information and reference purposes.

Those who wish to travel to a particular tourist destination shall be given incentives which include but are not limited to discounts for traveling, accommodation and meal expenses. Provided, that, only professionals, entrepreneurs and employees of both the public and private sector with gross income not exceeding Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P 500,000.00) per annum can avail of this incentive. Provided, further, that the qualified professionals, entrepreneurs and employees should present a copy of their Income Tax Return (ITR) as proof of income to avail of the incentive.

SEC. 5. **Implementing Agencies**. The Department of Tourism in coordination with the Philippine Tourism Authority, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines, the Philippine Tour Operators Association, the Philippine Travel Agencies Association, and the Transport Sector shall formulate the local tourism incentive packages that would correspond with the needs of the local tourist sub-groups, which includes but is not limited to, the Elderly, Students, Families, and Young Professionals.

The Department of Tourism in coordination with the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Department of Trade and Industry shall draft the implementing guidelines of this Act. These agencies shall have thirty (30) days from the formulation of the local tourism packages to finalize the implementing guidelines.

The Department of Tourism shall publish the implementing guidelines in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 6. **Separation Clause**. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions.

SEC. 7. **Repealing Clause**. All acts, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. **Effectivity**. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved